

S. M. Allister

THE
RELIGIOUS MONITOR,
AND
Evangelical Repository.

DEVOTED TO THE PRINCIPLES OF THE REFORMATION, AS SET FORTH IN THE FORMULARIES OF THE WESTMINSTER DIVINES, AND OF THE CHURCHES IN HOLLAND.

VOL. VIII.

DECEMBER, 1831.

NO. 7.

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Thus saith the Lord, stand ye in the ways and see and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest to your souls.
JER VI. 16.

EDITED BY A MINISTER OF THE ASSOCIATE CHURCH.

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THOUGHTS ON THE EXTENT AND CERTAIN-
 TY OF SALVATION.

The article annexed is from the pen of a layman, and abounds in rich and scriptural ideas, a circumstance which, in these days of anti-scriptural notions, will compensate for its want of systematical arrangement. We cheerfully give it a place in our pages, not only for the sake of the good sense which it contains, but also for the sake of recommending to private christians, what seems to have been a practice with the writer, viz:—the committing to paper of those thoughts, which arise, as is believed, through the teaching of the Spirit of truth, on subjects connected with the great salvation of wrath-deserving and impotent sinners. The divinity of our correspondent and the popular divinity of the day, form not only a striking, but a very awful and solemn contrast. But let it be our concern and that of our readers to embrace the divinity which our *lay correspondent* has embraced, because it is the divinity taught in the Holy Scriptures, and received by every one, who has been taught by the Spirit of truth.

[For the Religious Monitor.]

MR. EDITOR.—The following I find in my memorandum book, written some 12, or 15 years since, if you deem it worthy a place in your useful Magazine you are at liberty to make such use of it. P.

As man, by transgression, had violated an infinitely holy and righteous law, which is eternal in its binding force upon its subjects, and which could not be repealed or abrogated without the impeachment of the Law Giver, his eternal destruction was inevitable, unless a surety could be found of sufficient dignity of character to fulfil all its demands, both of obedience and of suffering in his room and stead. The justice of God could be satisfied with nothing short of the

holy, spotless life and blood of the surety; and with that it was fully satisfied when Jesus Christ exclaimed "IT IS FINISHED," and expired on the cross.

Now we may ask what it was that was *finished*? when Christ uttered that exclamation and bowed his head and gave up the ghost. Was nothing more effected by this solemn and tragic scene than the satisfaction of the justice of God for his violated law abstractly considered? Do not the scriptures uniformly teach us that the whole work of redemption, as a sure and unfailing ground of salvation, was fully completed by the sacrifice of Christ, "*so that there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin?*"

Now if this finished work of redemption embraced all mankind without exception; and if notwithstanding, some men shall die in their sins, under the curse of God's law, and perish eternally, will not this be taking pay twice for the same offence? Does not such a position set the divine attributes at war with each other? The covenant of grace includes only the heirs of salvation. The paschal lamb was not slain for the Egyptians, but for the people of God; and therefore says the Apostle alluding to this type, "*Christ our passover is sacrificed for us, or for believers,*" John 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 26, 28, &c. The ark could undoubtedly have saved more from the flood had they entered into it. God was pleased to ordain not many arks, but one only, and by that one to deliver his chosen few: a striking representation of that remnant of whom the great author of the covenant says, *they shall be my people and I will be their God.*

When God had fixed upon the method of man's recovery from the ruin of the fall, (we may be sure he would never promote his salvation in a way injurious to his divine perfections,) he proposed to deliver sinners in

a way, in which his absolute sovereignty, his free grace, his inflexible justice, his unsearchable wisdom, his unchangeable truth, his unspotted holiness, his almighty power, his goodness and his mercy, might all harmonize and be equally glorified. In this way the salvation of his elect by Christ Jesus is obtained. Moreover he designed, in the appointment of his Son to be the Redeemer of men, and in publishing the glad tidings of great joy which the everlasting gospel contains, to humble fallen, guilty man, to exalt Christ the mediator, and to promote holiness. The scripture nowhere speaks of a conditional or uncertain redemption, depending on the will of fallen man, as to all its salutary effects. It is contrary both to reason and scripture that Christ left salvation depending upon man's own will which had ruined him in his best estate. Could Christ expect that the intention of his death would be carried into effect in such a way? Will the fallen creature take more pains to secure the good effects of his death than the sufferer and Saviour himself? How inconsistent and absurd must it be for Christ to exercise the greatest love towards, and inflict the greatest wrath upon, the same persons at the same time, as must have been the case, if in his infinite love he died to redeem all men—multitudes being in hell suffering his vengeance at the same time he loved them and gave himself for them!—Is it not revolting to reason and common sense to say that the saved are no more beholden to the Redeemer than the damned? And yet this must be true if Christ loved and died for all men without exception. This is nothing less than charging God with taking double satisfaction for the same offence, one from Christ the surety, and another from the damned themselves.

But justice, being once fully satisfied in the person of the Mediator, has nothing but blessings for God's people. It cannot exact the penalty twice—not one of the redeemed of the Lord shall ever taste of that eternal death which he tasted for every one of them. Jesus in the great and glorious work of redemption made a *precise* purchase, for which he paid a *precise* sum; unless we can suppose that he undertook, without counting the cost, and therefore failed in the undertaking, by making a more foolish bargain than a simple man: the very supposition of which is nothing short of blasphemy. Christ is abundantly able to keep all that he has purchased with his blood. Hence he says to all his people, "*ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price—even the pre-*

cious blood of the Son of God." Would a common shepherd purchase a portion for wolves? And will Christ the great Shepherd and bishop of souls, who knows every spiritual wolf, and can detect and defeat all their devices, and who has promised to protect his sheep, suffer the objects of his choice to perish? The promise of divine aid was given to the spiritual seed of Abraham, "*and to all that are afar off, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call.*" This donation of grace is co-extensive with his purpose, it extends to all his people that are afar off in point of time, or place, or disposition of soul; they all meet in the one eternal Spirit and are brought nigh by the blood of Christ. To suppose that God wills any thing that he doth not fully accomplish, is to call in question his power to perform it, as will and power in God are inseparable and efficient attributes; although by the Arminian heresy I am aware, that Christ as God is represented as willing and desiring the salvation of some, who, notwithstanding his will and desire, do never obtain salvation. Hence it follows that Christ either hath not power to accomplish what he wills shall be accomplished, or that he can will the accomplishment of a good thing without ever exerting his power to accomplish it. To suppose the one, is to substitute impotence for Omnipotence, and so to undeify him; and to assert the other, is to rob him of his goodness at the express violation of his truth: and upon this principle the all wise God is represented as working without having any design, and willing without producing any determined effect. Nay more, the attainment of his own will depends upon the wills of his creatures, and so the Almighty agent of all good must wait, in his operations, upon a set of beings who of themselves can will and do nothing but evil, and that continually. If these things be so, where is the immutability of his promises? If the fulfilment of them wholly depends upon the will of his depraved, helpless creatures, then it would indeed follow, as some pretend, that a person can fall from saving grace, once bestowed, and finally perish. And the absurdity will not stop here, for why may he not fall from glory also? Is not the same Almighty power as much pledged to keep and preserve in the one case as in the other? Truly if the God of the Arminians, Unitarians and such Heretics, who is dependant on the will of his creatures, who has no fixed plan of procedure in relation to man's salvation, whose designs are so often defeated by man's obstinate rejection of Christ;

if I say, such a God shall ever obtain the government, then the very ground of the christian's faith is swept away, and we have no security, that the blessed in heaven and the damned in hell will not, at some future period, be obliged to exchange places, and how often this may take place the abettors of such sentiments ought to know.

But the elect of God, the chosen in Christ, are not left to the exercise of a will naturally perverted, to begin life, nor to the exercise of a power altogether debilitated and depraved to preserve it. *The life they live in the flesh is by the faith of the Son of God*, and that faith is the result of a divine operation. They are also *kept through faith unto salvation*. It consequently follows, that not one of them shall perish, but all shall finally and eternally be saved.—*God hath chosen them from the beginning*, not for a day or a year or a time, but to a salvation which can afford *everlasting consolation and good hope through grace*. God simply and unchangeably wills, and all the divine attributes are concerned in the accomplishment of what he wills—his wisdom which cannot err, his knowledge which cannot be denied, his truth which cannot fail, his love which nothing can alienate, his justice which cannot condemn any for whom Christ died, his power which none can resist, and his unchangeableness which can never vary. Therefore the salvation of all the redeemed is certain without a peradventure.

Christ in scripture is called our Redeemer; he came not only to honor the law by obeying its precepts and suffering its penalty; there was far more intended; he came to recover a lost inheritance. The people of God are his inheritance. *Jacob is the lot of his inheritance*. To this the apostle alludes, when he says, *God sent forth his Son made of woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons*. Again, *Christ has obtained eternal redemption for us*. He came then to recover our lost inheritance of purity and happiness, and to reinstate us in the everlasting possession of the favor of God.

Christ from eternity sat down and counted the cost of accomplishing the designs of salvation; and therefore is not like foolish architects, beginning to build without an estimate, and leaving off without ability to finish. *Jehovah is the rock and his work is perfect*. The truth of God is, like his mercy, enduring for ever; and against his chosen the gates of error, of hell, can never

prevail. Rich, free, and sovereign grace was in all his designs, and eternal glory will crown all his works. A view of this subject caused the apostle to exclaim, *O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out*. Christ then is the Christian's keeper, and because he is an everlasting keeper they are kept for ever more. He hath engaged himself by an everlasting covenant, not to turn away from them, to do them good, but to put his fear in their hearts, so that they shall not depart from him. The whole of their perseverance like all other parts of salvation rests simply upon God, they have no ability to induce it, or maintain it, so long as for a moment in themselves. God says by the prophet, *I am Jehovah. I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed*.

If God changed from his purpose in saving a man, when ever the man left to himself, would change from his desire of being saved, God might renounce the strongest believer upon earth, in five minutes after he had committed him to himself. The helpless creature would soon be consumed, but God's people are not set upon slippery places, but *upon a rock, a sure foundation, a tried corner stone, elect and precious*, and resting there they shall never be confounded. The soul once born of the holy Ghost is never unborn, from that day forward: regeneration is a divine act, a supernatural work, which having once passed upon the soul, stands good for ever. The redeemed of the Lord are not bought with the blood of Christ, that the Devil might run away with the purchase, for they are kept not by their own power, but *by the power of God through faith unto salvation*. The Lord never made that sort of everlasting covenant, which a poor, weak and silly worm might frustrate; nor can he be reduced to any imaginable dilemma, which his infinite wisdom did not foresee, and for which his infinite strength did not provide; *known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world*. He knew his people would be rebels and could no longer follow than he might be pleased to lead; he knew that Satan and the powers of darkness would oppose; he foreknew when and where that opposition would arise, and he predetermined the bounds of its success; he also knew and foreknew all the objects of his everlasting love, arranged the times and circumstances of their appearance, and ordained the moment and manner of their final consummation

inglory. This God knew, and this hath God wrought for all his people, for his church; not one of them can be lost, unless he who is all-wise and almighty can be forced to lose them: *the gifts and calling of God, are without repentance.* The names of all the redeemed are written in the Lamb's book of life, and although Satan may endeavour to blot out as to their perception, yet he can never blot out as to God's intention. They are all enclosed in the archives of Heaven, nay they are engraven with an iron pen in the Rock of their salvation; the finger of God wrote them there, and the power of God will preserve them there; hence they are privileged to sing, "we have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." *I will extol thee my God, O King, and I will bless thy name for ever and ever.*

[For the Religious Monitor.]

A MAXIM OF BIBLE RELIGION.

(Continued from page 289.)

The scriptures brought forward from the Old and New Testaments in the two former papers, are sufficient, I trust, to convince any candid inquirer that it is a maxim of Bible Religion throughout, *to go forward.* According to the method proposed, I now proceed to apply it to the religion of our own time, that it may be seen what *ought* to be entitled *Bible Religion*, and what not.—And my earnest prayer to the God of truth is, that I may be able to dispel the deep delusion which prevents honest minds from seeing and embracing the truth.

The religion of the reformation claims our attention first. And here I would lay it down as self-evident, that the religion which coincides with this maxim in these three points, viz: its departure, its way of advancing, and its destination is agreeable to it, and founded upon it, and is the religion of the Bible, and by consequence, if it shall appear that the reformation coincides with it in these points, *it* must be the religion of the Bible.

First. Let us inquire what was the *Departure* of the Reformers? Ans. It was from the fellowship of the Roman Catholic Church, the head of which is the Pope of Rome. It will be conceded by all, except Roman Catholics, with whom at present we have nothing to do, that the Pope is Antichrist. And his character and that of his fellowship, is fully described in the Inspired Oracles, by which it may be easily and certainly determined what the departure of the reformers was. In Daniel, vii. 24, 25, he

is thus described. "And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise, and another shall arise after them, and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings, and he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the Saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws, and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time." In 2 Thess. ii. 3, his character and fellowship are given thus. "Let no man deceive you by any means, for that day shall not come except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he as God sitteth in the Temple of God, showing himself that he is God—and now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work, only he who now letteth will let until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming. Even him whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved." In 2 Tim. iv. 1, 2, 3, he is thus set forth, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times, some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of Devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath ordained to be received with thanksgiving, &c." Rev. xiii. 5, 6, 7. "And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in Heaven. And it was given him to make war with the saints and to overcome them, and power was given him over all kindreds and tongues and nations." And chap. xvii. 3, 4, 5, 6. "And I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns, and the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones, and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand, full

of abomination and filthiness of her fornication, and upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS, AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH—and I saw the woman *drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.*" The character of the Pope and his fellowship in these texts, is written in letters so legible and large that he who has the weakest capacity, and the smallest measure of knowledge, may read while he runs—And his conclusion must be, that to depart from such a fellowship, is to depart from the most mysterious and complicated system of error, superstition, delusion and wickedness, that has ever yet appeared upon the earth.

But it may not be improper to introduce here a few extracts from the historian, to show what was the actual state of matters in the Romish church before and at the time the Reformation took place.

"We must not conclude," says Mosheim, "from this apparent tranquility and security of the Pontiffs and their adherents, that their measures were applauded, or their chains worn without reluctance. This was far from being the case. Not only private persons, but also the most powerful princes and sovereign states, exclaimed loudly against the despotic dominion of the Pontiffs, the fraud, violence, avarice and injustice that prevailed in their counsels; the arrogance, tyranny and extortion of their legates; the unbridled licentiousness and enormous crimes of the clergy and monks of all denominations; the unrighteous severity and partiality of the Roman laws; and demanded publicly, as their ancestors had done before them, a *Reformation* of the church, in its head, and in its members, and a general council to accomplish that necessary and happy purpose."

Concerning the popes, he says—"Alexander VI. whom humanity disowns, and who is to be considered rather as a monster than as a man, whose deeds excite horror, and whose enormities place him among the most execrable tyrants of ancient times; stained the commencement of this century (the 16th) with the most tremendous crimes. The world was delivered from this papal fiend in the year 1503, by the poisonous draught which he had prepared for others, as is generally believed. He was succeeded by Pius III. who in less than a month was deprived by death of that high dignity. The vacant chair was obtained by fraud and bribery by Julian de la Rovere, who assumed the denomination of Julius II. To the odious list of vices with which Julius dishonored the pontif-

icate, we may add the most savage ferocity, the most audacious arrogance, the most despotic vehemence of temper, and the most extravagant and frantic passion for war and bloodshed." Of his successor, he says—"He was remarkable for his prodigality, luxury and imprudence, and even has been charged with impiety if not atheism."

Of the lower orders of the clergy he writes—"The licentious examples of the pontiffs were zealously imitated in the lives and manners of the subordinate rulers and ministers of the church. The greatest part of the bishops and canons passed their days in dissolute mirth and luxury, and squandered away, in the gratification of their lusts and passions, the wealth that had been set apart for charitable and religious purposes. Nor were they less tyrannical than voluptuous. For the most despotic princes never treated their vassals with more rigor and severity than these ghostly rulers employed towards all such as were under their jurisdiction."

Of the monks he writes—"The prodigious swarms of monks that overspread Europe were universally considered as cumberers of the ground, and occasioned murmurs and complaints every where. And, nevertheless, such was the genius of the age, of an age that was but just emerging from the thickest gloom of ignorance, and was suspended as it were between darkness and light; that these monastic drones would have remained undisturbed, had they taken the least pains to preserve any remains even of the external air of decency and religion, that used to distinguish them in former times.—But the Benedictines, and the other monkish fraternities, who were vested with the privilege of possessing certain lands and revenues, broke through all restraint, made the worst possible use of their opulence, and, forgetful of the gravity of their character and of the laws of their order, rushed headlong into the most shameless practice of vice in all its various kinds and degrees."

Concerning the state of Theology, he says—"The wretched and senseless manner of teaching theology, in this century, may be learned from the many books yet extant, which were wrote by the divines it produced, and which in reality have no other merit than their enormous bulk. The expositors of the holy scriptures were very few in number, during this century. And there were scarcely any of the christian doctors that had a critical knowledge of the sacred oracles. This kind of knowledge was so rare, that when Luther rose, there could not be found even in the University of Paris, which was

considered as the first and most famous of all the public schools of learning, a single person qualified to dispute with him, or oppose his doctrine upon a scripture foundation.—Any commentators that were at this time to be found, were such as, laying aside all attention to the true meaning and force of the words of scripture, which their profound ignorance of the original languages and of the rules of criticism rendered them incapable of investigating, gave a loose to their vain and irregular fancies in the pursuit of mysterious significations.”

I shall only add one extract more, giving a view of the public worship of that time. “It was now no more than a pompous round of external ceremonies, the greatest part of which were insignificant and useless, and much more adapted to dazzle the eyes than to touch the heart. The number of those who were at all qualified to administer public instruction to the people was not very considerable; and their discourses, which contained little else than fictitious reports of miracles and prodigies, insipid fables, wretched quibbles, and illiterate jargon, deceived the multitude instead of instructing them. Several of their sermons are yet extant, which it is impossible to read without indignation and contempt.—The subjects they treated on were the authority of the holy mother church, and the obligations of obedience to her decisions—the virtues and merits of the saints, and their credit in the court of heaven—the dignity, glory and love of the blessed Virgin—the efficacy of relics—the duty of adorning churches and endowing monasteries—the necessity of good works, as that phrase was then understood, to salvation—the intolerable burnings of purgatory, and the utility of indulgence.”—[*Cent. xvi. vol. 3d, pages 10–22.*]

From these statements it is easy to infer what a miserable state of darkness, bondage and debasement the people must have been in.

Let us also hear the Reformers themselves in the year 1580, who had a much nearer and more distinct view of what they departed from, than any now living can be supposed to have. “We abhor and detest all contrary religion and doctrine (viz. contrary to the truth of God’s written word,) but chiefly all kinds of Papistry in general, and particular heads, even as they are now damned (condemned) and confuted by the word of God and the Kirk of Scotland. But in especial we detest and refuse the usurped authority of that Roman Anti-christ upon

the scriptures of God, upon the kirk, the civil magistrate, and the consciences of men; all his tyrannous laws, made upon indifferent things against our christian liberty—his erroneous doctrines against the sufficiency of the written word, the perfection of the law, the office of Christ and his blessed evangel, (gospel)—his corrupt doctrine concerning original sin, our natural inability and rebellion against God’s law, our justification by faith only, our imperfect sanctification, &c. obedience to the law—the nature, number and use of the holy sacraments—his five bastard sacraments, with all his rites, ceremonies and false doctrine, added to the ministration of the true sacraments, without the word of God—his cruel judgment against infants departing without the sacrament—his absolute necessity of baptism—his blasphemous opinion of Transubstantiation, or the real presence of Christ’s body in the elements, and receiving of the same by the wicked, or bodies of men—his dispensation with solemn oaths, perjuries and decrees of marriage, forbidden in the word—his cruelty against the innocent divorced—his devilish mass—his blasphemous priesthood—his profane sacrifice for sins of the dead and quick—his canonization of men—calling upon angels or saints departed—worshipping of imagery, relics and crosses—dedication of kirks, altars, days—vows to creatures—his purgatory and prayers for the dead—praying or speaking in a strange language—his processions and blasphemous litany, and multitude of advocates and mediators—his manifold orders—his auricular confession—his desperate and uncertain repentance—his general and doubtful faith—his satisfactions of men for their sins—his justification by works—works of supererogation, merits, pardons, peregrinations and stations—his holy water, baptizing of bells, conjuring of spirits, crossing, saying, anointing, conjuring, hallowing of God’s good creatures, with superstitious opinions joined therewith—his worldly monarchy and wicked hierarchy—his three solemn vows, with all his shavellings of sundry sorts—his erroneous and bloody decrees made at Trent, with all the subscribers and approvers of that cruel and bloody band, conjured against the kirk of God—and finally we detest all his vain allegories, rites, signs and traditions, brought into the kirk without or against the word of God and doctrine of this true Reformed Kirk.”—[*The National Covenant or Confession of Faith of the Church of Scotland.*]

Here then, let the reader observe, we have three witnesses agreeing as to the

character of the Popedom, and the Fellowship of the Romish Church.—The Spirit of prophecy speaking in the Scriptures—the body of the Church of Scotland speaking in her public capacity as God's witness, with the hand lifted up to the searcher of hearts, and the historian Mosheim, who is generally received as of good repute for truth and veracity. And the united testimony is, that it is a "Mystery of iniquity, a daring blasphemy, a monstrous superstition, a system of error, hypocrisy and lies.—This is that from which the Reformers took their departure.

They went out not knowing whither they went.—When Luther began to preach against indulgences, he scarcely proposed any thing more than to have that base imposition exposed and put down. He had not a thought of leaving the mother church, much less of denouncing the Pope as Anti-christ, and rejecting his authority, as totally unfounded in the word of God. But "he being in the way, the Lord led him;" he went on step by step, until he came out from among them and was separate. The first steps of Calvin and Knox were strictly similar; and the same might be applied to many others. For many of them resembled the man who looked up and saw men as trees walking. But as they proceeded, their eyes were strengthened, and they at length, all of them, saw distinctly marked every line and feature of that "man of sin."

It must also be admitted that they forsook all, they forsook the great and popular body, and stood out before the Catholic world as individuals, not like others in their opinions and practice, as men wondered at. They left the greatest abundance of wealth—the prospect of preferment, honor, ease, and pleasure. They forsook patrons, friends and relatives, and whatsoever else would have retained them in fellowship with the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth.

They went out when they had every kind of suffering in sure prospect. For the alarm was quickly sounded throughout the wide domain of Satan's empire. Hell was moved to its inmost recess. Every fiend in devil and human form was summoned with all his capacities, energies and resources to the contest. Every effort within the skill of the assemblage to plan, or their power to execute, was put forth to crush the Reformation. Treachery, craft, deception and plots, wars, persecutions and tortures, banishments, imprisonments and death. This was the dreadful array of dangers and sufferings which faced them if they would dare

to depart. But they departed—they met the proud foe in the name and strength of that God who bade them come out, and they conquered! "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death." Rev. xii. 11.

And they departed without the prospect of any earthly reward. How could they possibly have any, so long as the exercise of reason remained to them, (and that it did so in no ordinary degree, their works bear witness to the present hour.) Their cause they knew to be hated of all men, and would be to the end of the world hated by the unregenerate heart. They might justly reason that future ages would think of them as the present, and therefore honor and fame after they were gone, except by those societies which they were instrumental in forming, and but some of them, were as entirely out of the question as wealth, ease and pleasure were in their own time.

I trust that I have now proved that the Reformed Religion coincides with the maxim in the first point—the departure, and that so far it appears to be the religion of the Bible.

I proceed to enquire by what way they went. This is the second point. And here it may be stated negatively, that they rejected the way of authority, whether of Popes or councils, or both, and they refused to go in the way of the Fathers, or in the way of tradition. This they did, as we have seen, with detestation and abhorrence. They did not reject all use of these things, or any good use to which they could be applied. And there were various ways then, and there are ways still, in which all these may be used to serve the cause of truth and holiness, to put to silence the ignorance of foolish men, and stop the mouth of iniquity. Many a time, for example, the fathers decide against popery, and in favor of the reformed doctrine. The decisions of councils may be brought, especially those held in early days, to oppose the decrees of the Pope. And the authority of one pope may be brought against that of another, and so their infallibility is at once annihilated. But they refused them all as the way of faith and practice.

I observe that they set forward in the way of the Bible!!—reader can you give credit to this! Will you not reply *this* is the way which the present age claims to have discovered? And if the reformers really and truly found this way and went in it so long as three centuries ago; What means

all this uproar against them, and this outcry against the "frame work raised around the Bible," and "human authority?" What is to be understood by the confident pretensions and bold assertions of this generation? That it is the age of the Bible—of Bible religion and Bible christians? I shall endeavor to satisfy you on these points afterwards, but I only speak the solemn truth, when I say, that the reformers set forward in the *way* of the *Bible*—Bible faith and Bible practice. Their motto was the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible. Let them only know that a tenet or a practice, however popular and however serviceable it might be to their interest, was not taught in the Bible, and they would reject it; and on the contrary, if it *was* in the Bible, however small it might seem in the eyes of men, and however obnoxious to hatred and contempt, the holding of it might render them, they would *cleave* to it at every hazard. If you ask, why did they detest and abhor "all kinds of Papistry in general, and particular heads?" They will answer you, it was because "it was condemned and confuted by the *word of God*." Why did they detect all his vain allegories, rites, signs and traditions? They again reply because "they were brought into the Kirk *without or against the word of God*." Why did they "believe in their hearts, confess with their mouths, subscribe with their hands, and constantly affirm before God and the whole world," that the reformed religion including doctrine, worship, government and discipline, "is the true christian faith and religion, pleasing God and bringing salvation to man?" Their answer is, "we are now thoroughly resolved in the truth by the word and Spirit of God." See the confession of the Church of Scotland and national covenant above quoted.

Hear Luther, "The sacred writings are not to be understood but by that Spirit with which they were written, which Spirit is never felt to be more powerful and energetic than when *he* attends the serious perusal of the writings which he himself dictated.—Setting aside an implicit dependence on all human writing, *let us strenuously adhere to the scriptures alone*." The Rev. Adolp Monod, one of the protestant ministers in Lyons, France, describes the reformation in the following energetic terms, "But God excited a new Spirit among Christians. A reform was called for, but the call at first attracted little notice. It was notorious that men were growing tired of Popery, but little was it known whereto the evil tended and where lay the remedy. A voice was

heard. It cried *The Bible!* The spirit of reform began to show itself and reformers to spring up, that is, men who had been ordained to bring back the Bible, and again uphold it to the eyes of Europe. This office they performed by a means which Providence had just then placed in readiness—the art of Printing. Their first object was to refute the principle by which the Bible had been wrested from the hands of men. They did this by the testimony of the Bible itself. They showed that there is one, one only all sufficient interpreter of scripture even the Holy Spirit, as it is written, "they shall be all taught of God," and that neither the Bishop of Rome, with his councils, nor any other human authority has a right to interfere between God and man."

The foundation upon which, says a reformed church, we rest the whole of our ecclesiastical constitution is the testimony of God in his word. That main pillar of Reformation, "that the Bible contains the whole religion of Protestants," we adopt for our fundamental principle. See testimony of the Gen. A. Synod, Scotland. That this is the way they all agreed and constantly affirmed. Accordingly among the first of their works were translations of the Bible into the vernacular tongue. The first English Bible we read of was that translated by John Wickliffe about the year 1360. Luther, Knox, Calvin and many others exerted themselves in this way to put the Bible into the hands of the people in their own language. And the labor in this sort that was undergone in the sixteenth century was immense, and to their critical knowledge and deep research are *we*, who account them fanatics and fools, this day indebted for what we know.

Besides translating and disseminating the Bible they *searched it*. They searched it with the greatest zeal, perseverance, diligence and humility. They brought to this work their whole mind and heart. They employed in it abilities far above the ordinary measure, and many of them the most profound erudition. Was not this to go forward in that Bible path laid out by the Saviour, "*Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life and they are they that testify of me*," John, v. 39.—Their discoveries, yet warm from the heart, were set before their people in their sermons and methodically arranged in their writings. Every proposition of doctrine was accompanied by some appropriate passage from the Holy oracle, which either expressed or obviously implied it. The manner in which the venerable Assembly at West-

minster proceeded was this, "for the better preparing of business the house divided themselves into three committees, and no man was excluded from attending any of the three he pleased. As the Parliament gave order in writing to take any purpose under consideration, the committees in their afternoon meeting prepared matters for the next day. They first set down their mind in distinct propositions and then supported them with apposite texts of scripture, and after the opening of their next meeting the scribe read the proposition and scriptures, and then whoever stood up of his own accord, addressing himself to the prolocutor, was allowed to speak so long as he would without interruption. And being generally men who had studied their speeches and were of prompt utterance, their discourses were most interesting. When any proposition, with the text brought to confirm it, was duly weighed, which ordinarily was the work of several days, the most part called to the question, whereupon one of the scribes carrying the book to the prolocutor, he read the proposition to the Assembly, and said, "as many as are of opinion that the question is well stated in the proposition, let them say it." Stevenson's History, vol. iii. p. 110. It was in this painful manner that the propositions in the Catechisms and the Westminster Confession and systems of Theology were built *upon the word of God*, which have by way of contempt been styled "Frame work raised around it."

When defending their doctrine, (for they had to fight every inch of their way forward,) their appeal for the truth of their judgment was invariably to the word of God. And unless their adversaries could show that this only infallible Judge gave it against them, it was in vain to bring forward the Fathers, the councils, &c.

They restored the Bible to its place in the instruction of the people and the worship of God. They resolved that every Sabbath day in ordinary cases, a portion of it should be employed in being sung to the praise of God out of the Psalms which God has given for that purpose—that another portion of it should be read—that a third portion of it should be explained, and that every public discourse should be grounded upon it, both in its general and particular heads, and distinct propositions. They required of all seeking admission into their societies a distinct profession of this belief, "that the Old and New Testaments are the word of God, and the only infallible rule of faith and practice, from which nothing is to be taken away,

and to which nothing is to be added."—They likewise required that the Bible should be employed in the worship of their families morning and evening. And they would have a place for it even in their common schools, that it might be read and committed by their children from the time they could read any. And so particular were they in this matter, that candidates for their schools must undergo a minute examination before a Presbytery, not only on his literature, but his religious knowledge and attachment to the Bible and its doctrines, before he was admitted to teach. Nor was this all, these schools must be visited by a committee of Presbytery at stated seasons, in order to secure the execution of their determination of training up their children in the way they should go—the Bible.

Farther, they set forward not only in the way of the Bible, but with the purpose of occupying the *whole* of that way, in relation to faith, government, worship and practice. In other words, it was no less their aim to diminish naught therefrom, than it was to add aught thereto. They had not yet thought of that wicked and ruinous distinction which is no where to be found, and no where exists, save in the brain of superficial thinkers—essentials and non-essentials. They did not all make the same progress in every thing, it is true; but there were other and better reasons for any discrepance that existed, than this distinction.

Yet it is truly remarkable, how far they went forward in substantial agreement, especially when it is considered that they were differently placed. "Their next step," says M. Monod, already quoted, "was to prepare a summary statement of the truth as they found it taught in the scripture, in order to distinguish it with more precision from the Romish errors. These formularies which they called *confessions of faith*, though composed by men of different characters, in different places, in different circumstances, in different languages, for different people, and though certainly different in style and in certain minutiae of interpretation, *all laid for their foundation the doctrine of grace*, and by so doing evinced it to be the doctrine of the Bible. To these summaries of doctrine they subjoined a form of government copied from that which was imposed on the primitive church by the Apostles. Thus the bible was circulated a second time, and with it the doctrine of grace, and upon this foundation were built *all* the Reformed churches".

But perhaps none of them made greater

advances in this way than the Church of Scotland, and especially between the years 1638 and 1650. This has been acknowledged by sundry other churches themselves. The Lutherans have their consubstantiation, besides sundry rites, ceremonies, vestments, &c. which they counted tolerable, and some of them useful. The Church of England has her Episcopacy, her days, rites, ceremonies, signs and robes, and except her sound Articles, and her disowning the Pope's authority, is but a little removed in government and forms from that of Rome.

The churches of Holland, &c. have their days and times, which they observe. But the Church of Scotland made a clean riddance of all the filthiness which the mother of harlots had brought into the house of God. She utterly rejected utility and accommodation, as a foundation for a single article in her constitution and practice. She more than any other drew a broad line of demarkation between church and state. She asserted and made good the assertion, that the Church is Christ's independent kingdom, with sufficient intrinsic power to transact every thing which properly belongs to her. She stood more fully out for Jesus Christ as the supreme and only head of the Church. And perhaps she brought more fully to view, if not by doctrinal statement, yet by her practice, the character and duty of the church as *God's witness*.

Perhaps some will say the main question is yet unanswered. We give the Reformers credit for good motives, and admit that they *purposed* to go in the way of the Bible, and *thought* they were doing so; but was this *actually the case*? Are their doctrines, worship, &c. really and truly those of the Bible? If not, all that has been advanced must go for nothing. In reply, it cannot be reasonably expected that I should enter here into a discussion of every peculiar doctrine of the Reformation, in order to prove that it is founded on the Bible, and if I should, I could advance nothing better or more convincing, than what the Reformers themselves have often advanced. And opposers might still object, that it was *exparte* evidence, and we might with equal justice at least, retort upon *them*. But I shall advance a few considerations, which have a manifest bearing upon this question, and which will scarcely be denied by any one versant at all in the history of the 16th and 17th centuries. It will not be denied by those who know what sort of men the Reformers were, that very many of them

were correct and powerful reasoners, deeply skilled in the original languages of the Scriptures, and acquainted with the rules of interpretation, and therefore well able to judge of their meaning. Take for example our present English translation of the Bible, now about 200 years old. Often as it has been tried, and oftener proposed, who is he that has yet been able to make any material improvement upon it, or such as to warrant a new one?

Take, along with their skill in the Scriptures, the strong conviction of the truth of their doctrines which they felt, and expressed. They hold such language as the following, under solemn oath: "Being now fully resolved in the truth by the word and Spirit of God." And who that knows the history of their sufferings on account of their doctrine, can doubt that they were thoroughly persuaded, that it was the doctrine of Scripture. But let us look at the *Effects* of their doctrine.

(To be continued.)

[For the Religious Monitor.]

THE PUBLIC READING OF THE SCRIPTURES.

THE DIRECTORY FOR THE PUBLIC WORSHIP OF GOD, agreed upon by the ASSEMBLY OF DIVINES at Westminster, and approved by the GENERAL ASSEMBLY of the church of Scotland, contains a section relative to THE PUBLIC READING OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES, in which the following language occurs: "Reading of the word in the congregation, being part of the public worship of God, and one mean sanctified by him for the edifying of his people, is to be performed by the pastors and teachers. All the canonical books of the Old and New Testament shall be publicly read in the vulgar tongue, out of the best allowed translations, distinctly, that all may hear and understand."

According to the above extract, the reading of a portion of God's word, as a distinct part of public worship, is an ordinance of God, an established means of grace.—Is this really so? Had the venerable bodies above-mentioned any sufficient authority for regarding the public reading of the Scriptures in the light they did? Let the following considerations be duly weighed.

It was solemnly enjoined upon the church of Israel, to have the law, at stated seasons, read publicly in the audience of all the people, men, women and children, and the strangers that were within their gates. "And Moses wrote this law and delivered it unto

the priests, the sons of Levi, who bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and unto all the elders of Israel. And Moses commanded them, saying, At the end of every seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles, when all Israel is come to appear before the Lord thy God, in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing. Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law; and that their children, which have not known any thing, may hear, and learn to fear the Lord your God as long as ye live in the land whither ye go over Jordan to possess it." Deut. xxxi. 9—13.—After the return of the Jews from their captivity in Babylon, we find them practising agreeably to this enactment of the great Lawgiver of Israel. Neh. viii. 23. "And Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation,—And he read therein, before the street that was before the water gate, from morning until mid-day, before the men and the women and those that could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law." And chap. ix. 3. "They stood up in their place, and read in the book of the law of the Lord their God one fourth part of the day, and another fourth part they confessed, and worshipped the Lord their God." And from that time forward till the introduction of the gospel dispensation, it appears that the reading of the scriptures was regularly attended to, on the Sabbath, in every synagogue of the Jews. Hence in the Acts of the Apostles, chap. xiii. 15, we have this declaration, "And after the reading of the law and the prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, (Paul and Barnabas,) saying, Ye men and brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on."—And in the course of the sermon which Paul preached on that occasion, he says, v. 27., "For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him." And again in the 15th chapter, v. 21., we meet with a similar declaration: "Moses, of old time, hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogue every Sabbath day." Such then was the practice of the Jews in their stated meetings for the public worship of God. And it would seem that

our Saviour did not censure this practice, nor neglect it himself when he officiated in their synagogues. For we are told, Luke iv. 16., that "when he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read." And some have thought, that, on the occasion referred to, it was one of the lessons of the day, (there were two lessons read every Sabbath, the one from the law, the other from the prophets,) which he read, beginning according to the ordering of a wise Providence, with the 61st chapter of Isaiah: "The spirit of the Lord God is upon me," &c., which scripture he applied to himself, and from it proved his divine commission, to the utter astonishment and confusion, and even wrath of his ignorant and unbelieving audience.

For the purpose of illustrating more particularly the ancient practice of reading the scriptures among the Jews in their synagogues, we will furnish the reader with an extract from PRIDEAUX'S CONNECTIONS.

"The five books of the law are divided into fifty-four sections. This division many of the Jews hold to be one of the constitutions of Moses from Mount Sinai. But others, with more likelihood of truth, attribute it to Ezra. It was made for the use of their synagogues, and the better instructing of the people there in the law of God. For every Sabbath day, one of these sections was read in their synagogues, and this we are assured, in the Acts of the Apostles, was done among them,* of old time, which may well be interpreted from the time of Ezra. They ended the last section with the last words of *Deuteronomy*, on the Sabbath of the feast of tabernacles, and then began anew with the first section from the beginning of *Genesis*, the next Sabbath after, and so went round in this circle every year. The number of these sections was fifty-four, because in their intercalated years (a month being then added) there were fifty-four Sabbaths. On other years they reduced them to the number of the Sabbaths, which were in these years, by joining two short ones several times into one. For they held themselves obliged to have the whole law thus read over in their synagogues every year. Till the time of the persecution of *Antiochus Epiphanes*, they read only the law. But then, being forbid to read it any more, in the room of the fifty-four sections of the law, they substituted fifty-four sections out of the prophets, the reading of

* Acts, xv. 21.

which they ever after continued. So that when the reading of the law was again restored by the *Maccabees*, the section, which was read every Sabbath out of the law, served for their first lesson, and the section out of the prophets, for their second lesson; and so it was practised in the time of the Apostles. And, therefore, when Paul entered into the synagogue at *Antiochia in Pisidia*, it is said that *he stood up to preach, after the reading of the law and the prophets*,* that is, after the reading of the first lesson out of the law, and the second lesson out of the prophets. And in that very sermon which he then preached, he tells them,† that *the Prophets were read at Jerusalem every Sabbath day*, that is, in those lessons which were taken out of the *Prophets*."

After a consideration of the preceding facts, none can reasonably deny, that the public reading of the scriptures was a divine ordinance under the former dispensation, particularly when it is remembered, that Christ and his Apostles, so far from condemning the practice, as having originated in the *commandments of men*, did, on the contrary, countenance and approbate it.—Now as there was nothing *ceremonial* in this reading of the scriptures in the synagogues, it partaking entirely of the nature of a *moral duty*, its continued obligation in christian assemblies might reasonably be inferred. But without having recourse to inference, we have what may be considered express authority on which to rest the public reading of the scriptures, under the gospel dispensation. The apostle Paul, with great solemnity, thus addresses the Thessalonians: "I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren." 1 Thess. v. 27. No doubt this reading was to take place on the first day of the week, when the brethren came together. This appears from a similar charge delivered to the Colossians "When this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the CHURCH of the Laodiceans, and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea." Col. iv. 15. In addition to these authorities, we may also quote from the same apostle's charge to Timothy. "Give attendance to READING, to exhortation and to doctrine." 1 Tim. iv. 13. The reading here enjoined upon Timothy, and through him upon all ministers of the gospel to the end of time, appears from the connection to relate to the discharge, not of a private, but of a public and official duty. There is no

good reason why we should separate this from the other duties mentioned, which are obviously of a public nature.

In further corroboration of this subject, we might refer the reader to the practice of the primitive christian church. Justin Martyr, who lived in the second century, informs us, that in his time, "the writings of the prophets and apostles were read every Lord's day, as they had time, before sermon"—Tertullian, of the same century, thus writes: "In our public assemblies, the scriptures are read, psalms sung, sermons preached, and prayers presented." And others of the Fathers bear the same testimony.

Thus, then, the public reading of the scriptures, as a distinct part of the worship of God, appears to be a divine ordinance. And this consideration is sufficient, of itself, to overthrow all objections that may be urged against it. Indeed, to say, as is sometimes done, that we can read the Bible at home, and that there is no use for making it a part of public worship, is to cast reproach upon an ordinance of God. And, moreover, by a parity of reasoning, there would be no use for public praying and praising, for those duties can also be performed at home; no, nor for preaching, for sermons can be read at home. Carnal reason then, should never be allowed to shuffle an ordinance *out* of the church, any more than it should be allowed to bring one *in*. Had we no express authority for the practice recommended in the DIRECTORY, there would even seem to be a propriety in it, both, because the Bible is our authority for all our other public services of preaching, praying, praising, and administering the sacraments; and also, because the private reading of the scriptures is, by many, so shamefully neglected. Even this latter consideration made an English divine, when speaking of the importance of having this practice revived in such congregations as had laid it aside, say, "I wish it might be so, were it only for one melancholy reason, viz: for the sake of those miserable people, who neither read the word of God themselves, nor have a chapter read to them, from one week's end to another." The word of God is indeed the great means of salvation, and therefore the more use there is made of it the better. And if the private reading of it be acknowledged to be an important means of making people wise unto salvation, we cannot see, why the public reading of it, by an ambassador of Christ, should not be regarded in the same light?

Now, as the original design of the Di-

* Acts, xiii. 15.

† Acts, xiii. 27.

RECTORY was to promote *a covenanted uniformity in religion betwixt the churches of Christ*, and as some ministers of the Associate Church, from a sense of duty, do practice agreeably to the DIRECTORY in the particular under consideration, the foregoing remarks have been made with the view of recommending the same practice to all the other ministers, not only that *uniformity* may be observed, but also that there may be in this matter, a laudable walking in the footsteps of all the early churches of the Reformation.

PHILOBIBLOS.

[For the Religious Monitor.]

REMARKS ON MR. BARNES' SERMON.

[Continued from page 328.]

It should have been stated in the commencement of these remarks that it is not our intention to examine the merits of Mr. B's. sermon as a literary performance.—There are in it a number of expressions which may justly be considered as merely "unguarded." These shall be passed over with that lenity which is due to a young man. A few years experience will teach greater accuracy in language. We allude to such expressions as the following, on the first page—"Every man has some *secret* scheme by which he expects to be saved.—The text (Titus, iii. 4. 7.) expresses, I believe *every point* that is peculiar to christianity:—it expresses all that is *original* in the plan in a few words." A second thought might be sufficient to convince the author that by such sweeping statements, accuracy is sacrificed for the sake of juvenile energy. It is the theology of the sermon which is of the greatest consequence, and this alone we propose to consider. Proceeding according to the plan formerly suggested, the next thing which presents itself for consideration is,

The doctrine of negative depravity.—"God's plan of saving men, it is said, is based on the fact that the race is *destitute of holiness*, so says the text." The text says much more, it represents men as not merely destitute of *works of righteousness*, but as polluted and disordered, and needing both the *washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit*, as lost and needing to be *saved*, as ungodly and needing to be *justified*. If the author has stated correctly the foundation on which God's plan of saving men is based, we need no other kind of justification than that which corresponds to our condition—we need only the infusion of holiness, which is precisely the Roman Catholic justification. The

mere destitution of holiness does not call for remission or cleansing, but only for sanctification. And to this kind of justification, the whole system of doctrine taught has an evident tendency. "The great defect of man is the want of holiness; the great intention of Christ's death was to affect the heart and exercise a moral influence over our character." What kind of justification can we, then, have by his death, but that which corresponds to our state and to the intention of his death, the justification which consists in repentance and good works? To say that man is destitute of holiness is saying no more than might be said of many of the most innocent creatures; they are destitute of holiness having no capacity for it. The scriptures would certainly have warranted the use of much stronger language. They would warrant us in saying that God's plan of saving men is based on the fact that the whole world is guilty, altogether corrupt, ungodly, enemies, without strength, dead in sin, self-destroyed, lost and ruined. The want of holiness is one thing, but not the only thing which calls for salvation.—There is also original sin, the corruption of the whole nature, and many actual transgressions proceeding from it. "Christ is made of God unto us, wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." And whatever he is made to us we must lack in ourselves. He is made righteousness to us, as we are destitute of holiness, and sanctification, as we are corrupt.

To make sin merely negative is contrary both to scripture and reason. There is a plain distinction often made in the scripture between the negative sin of not doing good and the positive sin of doing evil. *Cease to do evil; learn to do well. The good which I would, I do not, the evil which I would not, that I do.* Reason also says, the mere want of love to God is negative, the hatred of him must be positive; ignorance, idleness and neglect of every kind are negative sins, but opposing the truth, fighting against God, and all the activity of men in sin must be positive. It would be quite as reasonable to define holiness to be the mere want of sin, as to define sin to be the mere want of holiness.

The same moderate opinion of our depravity, which appears in announcing this particular, appears in various other parts of the sermon. In the introduction it is said, "It is not, cannot be, human nature, to believe this, (that is, that we are exposed to endless suffering,) and still sit in indifference." Of course, if men knew that the

things which they do are worthy of death, human nature would keep them from taking pleasure in them. A belief in future punishment and human nature working together, would arouse them from their indifference, would fill them with that anxiety of which the author is speaking, and which is regarded by many, as the very door of conversion. Men are spoken of, not as having ruined themselves, but as liable to ruin, "if left to their own guidance." "It is not ascertained," says he, "that all men are as bad as they can be, or that one man is as bad as another, or that there is no morality, no parental or filial affection, no kindness or compassion in the world, no law of truth, and no honest dealing among men. The friends of religion are not blind to the existence of these qualities in a high degree, nor are they slow to value them, or to render them appropriate honors." The reader is desired to compare this account of human nature with that appropriate honor which is rendered to it by prophets and apostles, whose testimony we have, Rom. iii. 10-18. *There is none righteous, no not one, there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doth good, no not one, their throat is an open sepulchre, with their tongues they have used deceit, the poison of asps is under their lips, &c. &c.* It is acknowledged, that there are some expressions in the sermon which might be considered as bearing harder upon the natural character of man, but we must say once for all, that we are unwilling to admit the principle of explaining away erroneous expressions by others, which are not consistent with them. All error disagrees with itself as well as with the truth, and it is by this disagreement that we are able to expose it, but it does not render it harmless. A complete system of Calvinism was once extracted out of the works written or approved by Wesley, but this did not make him a Calvinist. If the most heretical only admit the scripture to be the rule of their faith, we may set this admission over against all their heresies, and by this means prove them to be as orthodox as the Bible; for, in declaring their belief in the Bible, they declare their belief in that, which is directly contrary to all their unsound doctrines.

This moderate opinion of our depravity, naturally and necessarily grows out of the next error which is advanced, and which if any one can be so called, is certainly fundamental. It is

The denial of Original Sin.—"Christianity," says the author, "does not charge on men crimes of which they are not guilty. It does not say, as I suppose, that the sinner is held to be personally responsible for the transgressions of Adam, or of any other man." This position is farther defended in a note, where we are told that, "Christianity affirms the fact that in connexion with the sin of Adam, or as a result, all moral agents in this world will sin—and sinning will die. It does not affirm, however, any thing about the *mode* in which this would be done." This defect of christianity, the author immediately supplies, telling us that we become sinners as a result of Adam's sin, in the same way that the family of a drunkard become "beggared, illiterate, perhaps profane, or intemperate." "Both facts," says he, "are to be explained on the *same principle*, as a part of moral government. The Bible does not, it is believed, affirm that there is any principle of moral government in the one case that is not in the other." If this be the case, then, as it is evident that there is no necessity nor certainty that children will follow the example of drunken parents, there is no necessity or certainty that the children of Adam will follow his example by transgression. Our being a race of sinners is no more necessary nor certain because we are descended from Adam, than our being a race of drunkards because we are descended from Noah; for observe, "there is no principle of moral government in the one case which is not in the other." Yet we are at the same time told that the whole race of men will sin, and sinning will die, there is "prophetic certainty" in it. So then there is a prophetic, infallible certainty that all will sin, and yet it is no more certain, than that we will follow our immediate parents in the vices of which they are guilty. Adam stands in no other relation to his children than any other parent to his. As Adam is supposed to stand in no other relation to us than other parents, is it not surprising that in explaining Rom. v. 12-19, our opponents have never thought of questioning, whether that *one man* spoken of were Adam or some other man. If Adam be not regarded as the one man by *representation* we may as well suppose any other to be meant. His name is only mentioned incidentally in stating the duration of death, which would not oblige us to suppose him to be meant in the other parts of the discourse. If this were true, it would appear impossible to reconcile the state of things in the world with the justice or holi-

ness of God. Instead of feeling ourselves chargeable with guilt, we must trace it to God as the prime author. We must consider that it is not owing to any sin of our own, that we are in our present sinful state, but that it is a part of God's "moral government." "*Let no man say when he is tempted, that he is tempted of God.*"—Adam wished to refer his sin to God, to make it a result of his moral government. *The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave to me and I did eat.* And we need not be surprised when he was so backward to own original sin, and so ready to make God the author of it, that his children are so prone to copy his example.—There can be no disputing in this case about the fact that we are sinners; the only question is, How has this happened, in consistency with the perfections of God? And surely the doctrine of our representative in Adam, notwithstanding its difficulties, exhibits the conduct of God in a light far more favorable, than if we account for sins, not by tracing them to our original guilt, and our own desperate depravity, but by referring them to undefined principles of moral government. We only involve ourselves in deeper and inextricable difficulties by forsaking the plain account of the entrance of sin which is given in the scriptures.

The author owns that his opinion on this subject varies from the confession of his faith, but he excuses himself by pointing out the gross absurdity of his confession. "It is difficult," he says, "to affix any clear and definite meaning to the expression, 'We sinned in him and fell with him.' It is manifest, so far as it is capable of interpretation, that it is intended to convey the idea, not that the sin of Adam is *imputed* to us, or set over to our account, but that there was a *personal identity* constituted between Adam and his posterity, so that it was really *our act*, and *ours only*, after all that is chargeable on us. This was the idea of Edwards"

If this be what we must understand by sinning in Adam and falling with him, it is no wonder that Mr. B. rejects the doctrine of the confession, the only wonder is how he or any other man ever happened to adopt it. If we and Adam are not federally but personally one, then all the sons of Adam are Adam himself, we are our own father, we are not ourselves, but the very person Adam; and Adam is no more Adam, but is the very same identical man whom we see multiplied into so many nations and generations of men, he is personally all his own

children. Now reader, observe this is not the idea of Mr. B. though contained in his confession, but this was the idea of Edwards and the Westminster divines. It was the very idea which they 'intended to convey.' They knew nothing about imputing sin; this we are told "is an invention of modern times, and it is not, it is believed the doctrine of the Confession of Faith."* These divines must either have had good memories to recollect when they were "personally" in the garden of Eden, eating the forbidden fruit, or they could not have had very tender consciences, to tell us "intending" this very thing, that they were there, in their own "identical persons," when they must have known that they were not then in existence. But what is the argument to prove that this personal identity of Adam and his posterity is the very idea which the Confession intentionally conveys? It is the use of the particles *in* and *with*. If these mean any thing, they mean personal identity. If we apply this new and original discovery to the interpretation of the sacred volume, it will give us some wonderful light about the meaning of many passages. Thus when Paul says Levi paid tithes *in* Abraham, he means that there was a personal identity of these two men. Levi is Abraham, and Abraham is Levi, and it was Levi's own act and his only to pay tithes to Melchisedec. When it is said, *In* Adam all die, this denotes that all and Adam are the same identical person, and that we all actually died long before we existed. When we are said to be *in* Christ and Christ *in* us, we are to understand this as teaching the personal identity of Christ and believers. When the Father is said to be *in* the Son and the Son *in* the Father; if the expression means any thing, it means that the Father and Son are the same identical person. So when we are said to be crucified *with* Christ, to be risen *with* him, to be quickened *with* him, and to sit together in heavenly places, we must in like manner understand a personal identity, and such an identity that all these things are our own acts and ours only. If the Westminster divines have used language so unintelligible and absurd, there is no doubt that they were led to this by the language of the scriptures. The first text which

* The author's faith must be very strong if he can believe there is nothing like imputing sin in these words of the Confession, chap. vi. sect. 3.: "The guilt of this sin was imputed, and the same death in sin and corrupted nature conveyed to all their posterity." One cannot help doubting whether he had carefully read the Confession on this subject.

they cite in proof that we sinned in Adam, is Rom. v. 12., and it is probable that they adopted as the most correct reading that which is approved by Beza, Grotius, Guise, Baldwin, Gill, Mark, and many other critics; and if so, in saying that we sinned in Adam, they only quoted according to their views, the words of the Spirit of God. "Death passed on all, for that all have sinned," rather in *whom all have sinned*, that is, in the one man by *whom* sin entered, all have sinned.

Mr. B., like most of the enemies of the doctrine of original sin, is more zealous to upset established principles than clearly to define what he would introduce in their room. He indeed attributes our sinful state to the moral government of God, but he does not tell us how this government introduces it. "It is in connexion with the sin of Adam, or as a result that all moral agents will sin, and sinning will die." So there is a connexion between the sin of the devils and the sin of man, and the sin of man results from theirs; and we cannot see that any thing is taught implying that we have any connexion with the one beyond the other. The passage quoted in proof of this connexion, is Rom. v. 12—19. This says nothing of our sin and death *resulting* from the sin of Adam. It is not said that by one man's sin many *will* become sinners and *will* die, but by one man sin entered, and all *have* sinned, and through the offence of one many *are* dead. By one man's disobedience many *were* made sinners; and death *hath* passed upon all men. The whole human family are in that place viewed not as exposed to crime, to judgment, to condemnation and to death, but as having sinned, as having been judged, as having received the sentence of condemnation, and as having suffered death according to their sentence. "All have sinned, judgment came on all to condemnation, death passed upon all men." And all this is by the one man. In, or by the one man we are made sinners; by one is the judgment and condemnation; and through the offence of this one we are dead. If in a just government we may be accused, tried, condemned and executed without guilt or participation in guilt, then and not till then, can we believe that these words do not teach that we participate in the guilt of Adam.

There is also in the author's statement a grievous misrepresentation of the Calvinist doctrine on this subject. He not only insinuates that the genuine old doctrine of Calvinism supposed a personal identity be-

tween Adam and his posterity, but that a responsibility is maintained beyond his first transgression, and a responsibility which may extend to the sins of others as well as to his; for after having said we are not answerable for the *transgressions* of Adam or of any other man, he adds in a note that this statement does not accord with the Confession of Faith, as if the Confession taught that we were personally answerable for all the transgressions of Adam and of other men. When will the enemies of sound doctrine learn fair dealing? With how much propriety did Dr. Scott complain that the opponents of Calvinism universally misrepresented it? So much is this the case, that the chief business of the friends of truth is fairly to state their own principles. In most cases this is the half, in many it is the whole that is necessary.

The doctrine of Calvinists on this subject appears to us to have been always the same, and to be most clearly taught in the scriptures. According to their views, God viewed all men as in Adam not personally but federally; the covenant made with him being made also with his posterity represented by him. Such transactions often occur among men in conveyance of estates under conditions binding their posterity, and in treaties made by individuals, binding whole nations, in present and future ages. That God regarded the first man in this light, we may learn, as writers on this subject have stated, from the manner of speaking employed in the first chapters of Genesis and many other parts of the Bible, where the whole of a kind is meant in that which is spoken respecting one or more individuals. When God blessed the particular things which he had made, he evidently blessed all of their kind. When he gave them their laws and privileges these are always viewed as of this universal extent. When, for instance, he said, Be fruitful and multiply, he did not mean that the power of reproduction should be confined to the individuals made, but that it should be of universal extent. In the same manner what was said by Noah to his sons, by Isaac and Jacob to theirs, and by Christ to his disciples, all must admit to be intended in this representative manner.—How could Japhet himself be enlarged? How could the sceptre abide with Judah till the coming of Shiloh? How could Christ be with the twelve apostles always to the end of the world? We also find evidences in the history of the fall of our first parents that God viewed them in this light. What was said to the serpent was evidently in-

tended against all the wicked. What was said to Eve of her sorrows and subjection was said to all her daughters. What was said to Adam of his labors and mortality was said to all his sons. And if we all share with them in the curse, how can it be that we are not all chargeable with their crime? It deserves notice also, that mankind are often spoken of as in the same state with Adam before he fell, a state in which they never were actually; they must therefore have been in it representatively. How can it be said that God made man upright, that is, not the first man alone, but the race of men, for it is added with reference to the whole human family, *they* have sought out many inventions? How can it be said that men are made, or rather, were made after the similitude of God? How can it be said that we have fallen, which implies that we were once upright; that we have strayed, which implies that we were once in the right way? How can we be said to be redeemed and restored to God, which implies that we were once with him? How can we be said to have departed from the Lord or to return unto him, if it be not supposed that we were once viewed as in an upright state, in the image and favor of God? Now, compare with these expressions what is said of the actual state in which all are now born—conceived in sin, shapen in iniquity, transgressors from the womb, by nature unclean and children of wrath; and how can these last be consistent with the former expressions, without supposing mankind to be represented in Adam? Now in consequence of this representation whatever Adam did is imputed to us, so long as he sustained the character of our federal head. No sane person ever imagined that the personal act of Adam was indeed our personal act, or that it is imputed to us as our personal act, but it is imputed to us as if it had been our act. The accomplices are not punished because the act was theirs, nor is it imputed to them as their personal act, but as if it had been such. The opinion maintained by many professed defenders of the doctrine of original sin, is only Mr. B.'s opinions in other words. They say that it is only the guilt of Adam's sin which is imputed, and in this they speak the language of Calvinists. But let us hear their definitions of guilt, and we shall find that the whole of what they mean is, that we are subjected to suffering in consequence of Adam's sin. Guilt, say they, is liability to punishment; it does not imply criminality on our part; in other words, it is only the punishment of Adam's sin which comes upon

us. This opinion is only so far worse than Mr. B.'s as it is more insidious, kissing the truth by fair words and then stabbing it under the fifth rib by a most deceitful definition. Guilt is indeed that part of sin which obligates to punishment, but it is not a mere liability to suffering; it is such a liability as implies the just desert of the punishment. It requires something quite beyond the common sense of men, to find out how we may at the same time be guilty and innocent of the same offence, guilty by punishment, and innocent in act. Where there is no criminality men will never believe that there can be guilt. This notion sets aside the representation of Adam, for if he sinned, and we only suffer for his sin, there is no representation. Representation implies not the doing of one thing and the imputing of another, but the imputing of the same thing which is done.

I hope the reader will excuse the length of these remarks. They might indeed appear disproportioned if considered merely as a review; but the object of these communications is rather to furnish some hints on some much contested doctrines. It is hoped therefore that a few pages will not be thought too much, on subjects of such importance; subjects too on which volumes have been written.

[To be continued.]

THE HISTORY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CONFIRMED AND ILLUSTRATED BY PASSAGES OF JOSEPHUS, THE JEWISH HISTORIAN.

[Concluded from page 363.]

Of the Grecians or Hellenists.—The term *Greek* is often used in the New Testament, as of the same import with that of *Gentile*, Rom. ii. 9. 1 Cor. i. 22—24, &c. The extensive dominions of the Persian empire fell under the power of the Greeks, by the conquests of Alexander the Great, which was a means of spreading the Greek language extensively; and, even when the Romans conquered the Greeks, the language of the vanquished maintained its ground. *Græca leguntur in omnibus fere gentibus, Latina suis finibus exiguis sane continentur*, says Cicero. On this account, a more fit designation to express the Gentiles could not be found, than that of Greeks. But, besides this word, there is another of great similarity to it, used sometimes in the New Testament, and which is rendered by our translators *Grecians*, and, more literally translated, is *Hellenists*. This is the word which is used in Acts, vi. 1. ix. 29. xi. 20.

There are different opinions respecting the persons who are designated by this name.—

Some have supposed, that the persons mentioned in Acts, xi. 20. unto whom the men of Cyprus and Cyrene preached, were Gentiles. But this would make the 20th verse contradict the 19th, in which it is said, that they who were scattered preached the word to Jews only. Besides, it was by Peter that "God at the first did visit the Gentiles;" and his vision and preaching to Cornelius were posterior to that of the persecuted disciples at Antioch, although they are recorded first. At any rate, it will not be pleaded that the Grecians mentioned in chap. vi. 1. were Gentiles. Others suppose them to have been Jews of the dispersion, who lived in different heathen countries; but this does not seem to agree with what is said of them in chap. ix. 29. The two opinions which have the greatest plausibility are, that those called Hellenists or Grecians were either Jews who used the Greek language, and not the Hebrew; or that they were proselytes to the Jewish religion, from among the Greeks or Gentiles, and that the name was given to distinguish them both from their own countrymen as to religion, and from the Jews as to descent. It is not pretended that there is any thing in Josephus, which decides this controversy; but, after mentioning some considerations in support of the last of these opinions, a passage shall be added from the Jewish historian.

Many learned persons have given their suffrages for the former opinion, and their arguments are not to be despised; although it may be remarked, that, according to the doctrine of some of them, the evangelists and apostles may all be called *Hellenists*, as, in their opinion, they wrote Hellenistic Greek, and used a Hellenistic translation of the Old Testament. The following things in the account of the institution of the deacons in Acts, vi. may be taken notice of in favor of the opinion, that by Grecians we are to understand proselytes from among the Greeks to the Jewish religion. This institution was occasioned by the complaint of the Grecians, who had embraced Christianity. 1. The account given of the multitude from whom the converts were made, favors this interpretation, chap. ii. They are described particularly from the countries of which they were natives; but there is one general distinction which applies to them all, they were either Jews or *proselytes*, ver. 10. 2. The complaint which was made by the Grecians was, that their widows were neglected in the distribution of church-goods. Now, those who were only proselytes to the Jewish religion would be more ready to

complain, than those who were Jews by descent, and only differed from their brethren in using the Greek language. 3. The account of the remedy provided for these complaints seems also to favor the second opinion. Seven persons were chosen to manage the distribution of goods; and we are particularly informed, that one of them was "a *proselyte* of Antioch." Does not this description imply, that such a person had been chosen, as particularly fitted to remove the occasion of the complaint made by the Grecians? Some suppose, that Nicolas was the only proselyte; but others have remarked, that he is not simply called a proselyte, but "a proselyte of Antioch," which is consistent enough with the supposition, if it does not also imply, that there were other proselytes among the number of the deacons. But, why is there so particular mention of one being of *Antioch*? May it not be inferred from this, that the Grecians from Antioch were chiefly concerned in the complaints which were made on this occasion? Antioch in Syria was formerly the capital of the Syro-Grecian kingdom of the successors of Alexander; there were many Jews in it, and they made a great number of proselytes. Let the following quotation from Josephus be considered. "The successors of Antiochus Epiphanes granted unto the Jews," says he, "the enjoyment of equal privileges of citizens with the Greeks themselves; and, as the succeeding kings treated them after the same manner, they multiplied to a great number. *They also made proselytes of a great many of the Greeks perpetually, and thereby, after a sort, brought them to be a portion of their own body.*"* Now, as the proselytes of Antioch were many, as they were admitted there to the same privilege with the Jews whom they joined, and enjoyed also equal civil privileges with their heathen brethren, they would be more ready to complain of partiality in the distributions at Jerusalem.†

Of Damascus, and Aretas the King.—

This prince is mentioned in the New Testament, and Damascus is said to have been under his dominions. "In Damascus," says Paul, "the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me, and through

* Jewish Wars, b. vii. ch. iii. § 3.

† The opinions of Fourmont, according to the account given of it by Wolfius, in Acts vi. 1. (for the writer has not seen the dissertation itself,) agrees with the above in some respects, only he confines the names to the Syrians, and supposes, that it refers not only to the converts to the Jewish religion, but also sometimes to those among them who continued heathens.

a window, in a basket, was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands," 2 Cor. xi. 32, 33. Josephus mentions, that Damascus fell under the power of the kings of Arabia Petrea, a considerable time before the birth of Christ. From him, also, it appears, that Aretas was a common name among the kings of that country, for he mentions one taking this name, after he succeeded to the sovereignty, (Antiq. b. xvi. chap. ix. § 4.) There was one of this name who reigned in Arabia Petrea, during the life of Herod the tetrarch, to whose daughter Herod was married, and who, it is most probable, was the person mentioned in the New Testament, (Antiq. b. xviii. ch. v. § i. 3.) It has been mentioned as a difficulty, that the scripture represents Aretas as having the sovereignty of Damascus; whereas this city was conquered and brought under the dominions of the Romans in the days of Pompey. But, in answer to this, it may be remarked, that the Romans suffered many of the kings and rulers whom they subdued to retain their authority and dominions, upon their submitting and becoming tributary to them. Or, allowing that the Romans removed Damascus from under the power of the kings of Arabia, it might be restored to them afterwards by treaty or conquest. Aretas, having invaded the dominions of Herod, on account of the injury which he had done to his daughter, and defeated him, Herod implored the assistance of the Romans. Accordingly, Vitellius, president of Syria, prepared, in conjunction with Herod, to invade Arabia Petrea; but, having received accounts of the death of Tiberius, the Roman Emperor, his powers expired, and he retired. This was a favourable opportunity for Aretas recovering his ancient possession, Damascus, if it was then detained from him by the Romans.

When Paul persecuted the church of God before his conversion, he obtained a commission from the chief priests to the Synagogues at Damascus, to bring bound to Jerusalem any of the disciples of Christ whom he might find there. He himself informs us, that Damascus was "a strange" or foreign "city." Surprise has been expressed by some, how the letters of the chief priests could have any authority in a foreign city. Witsius observes, that the authority of the Sanhedrim extended not only to the vicinity of the land of Judea, but even as far as Babylon and Alexandria, especially as to the punishment of false prophets, and persons accused of heresy; and he adds, that the Romans gave even to foreign synagogues

the power of imprisonment and stripes.*—But it is to be remarked, that the power of the Sanhedrim, or of the synagogues, was not the same even in the neighborhood of Judea, that it was in such cities as Babylon, Alexandria, and Antioch, where the Jews had a species of distinct subordinate government among themselves, and an *Alabarch*, or chief governor, of their own. Others have therefore supposed, that the government of Aretas was friendly to the Jewish religion, if he himself was not actually a proselyte unto it. The Idumeans who were in the immediate neighborhood of Arabia Petrea had embraced the Jewish religion, and professed it for a considerable time.—Herod the tetrarch had married a daughter of King Aretas, and we find no objections made unto this marriage by the Jews; nor did Herod plead, when he meant to put her away, that this marriage was unlawful; which would probably have been the case, had her father been of a strange religion. In the account which the apostle gives us of his escape from Damascus, it is apparent that the governor took a very active part against those who were under the hatred of the Jewish zealots, 2 Cor. xi. 32, 33.

Of Herod Agrippa.—There are three different persons of the name of Herod mentioned in the New Testament. The first is Herod commonly called the Great, who reigned in Judea at the time of our Saviour's birth. The second of that name was tetrarch or governor of Galilee; he was the son of the former; and it was he who put to death John the Baptist, and unto whom Pilate sent our Saviour, before he condemned him, because he was of Herod's jurisdiction. The third of the name is the person of whom we now speak, and whose actions and death are recorded in the 12th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles.† He

* Witsii. Melet. Leid. sec. ii. 3.

† Basnage, in his *Historico-critical Exercitationes* says,—that he was greatly astonished to find the learned Principal Baillie of Glasgow, confounding Herod Agrippa with Herod the tetrarch, and attributing to the latter the murder of James. This mistake he supposes he was led into by copying some of the ancients. It is indeed true, that in giving a cursory account of Herod the tetrarch, Mr. Baillie has said, that "he killed James with the sword;" but, a little afterwards, the just view of this fact is given; for, in narrating what happened to Herod Agrippa, he says, that after he had been made king, Agrippa returned home, where he greatly favoured the Jews, slew James, and imprisoned Peter," (Opus historet chronolog. lib. ii. p. 8.) When we consider that the work was published in Holland, that the author resided in Scotland, and that he was dead before the printing was finished, we can easily conceive the reason why the former inaccuracy was allowed to remain.

was the son of Aristobulus, the son of Herod the Great. his father having been put to death, he was brought up at Rome; and, by the favour of Caius Caligula, the Roman Emperor, had first the tetrarchy of Philip, and then that of Herod, his uncles, given to him. When Claudius was made Emperor, he received the title of king. and had all the dominions of his grandfather bestowed upon him. He is called *Agrippa* by Josephus. This historian informs us, that Agrippa was very zealous for the Jewish religion. "He came to Jerusalem, and offered all the sacrifice that belonged to him, and omitted nothing which the law required; on which account he ordained, that many of the Nazarites should have their heads shorn."* But he did not rest in these votive sacrifices.—Victims of a different kind must satisfy blind zeal for religion, and recommend the beginning of his reign to a superstitious people. Accordingly, he persecuted those who believed in Christ, put to death the apostle James, the brother of John, and imprisoned Peter, intending to bring him to public execution after the passover, which was prevented by the miraculous deliverance of this apostle from the prison. Of these things Josephus takes no notice, for his account of Agrippa is highly favourable, he having received it from Agrippa the younger, with whom he was in terms of intimacy.

The inspired historian informs us, that after Agrippa had put to death the keepers of the prison from which Peter had escaped, "he went down from Judea to Cesarea, and there abode;" and then adds an account of Herod's displeasure with the inhabitants of Tyre and Sidon, and of his death. The advocates of the church of Rome, eager on all occasions to invent something which may support the pretended monarchical primacy of Peter, have very sagely found out the ground of the offence which the Tyrians and Sidonians gave to Herod Agrippa. It seems, when Peter escaped from prison, he went down by the maritime coasts of Palestine, and visited and set in order the churches which had been founded there; and particularly, he appointed one of the presbyters who accompanied him to be bishop to the Sidonians, &c.; and this was the cause why Agrippa went down to Cesarea, and was displeased with those persons. Such is the account which the famous annalist Cardinal Baronius gives us.† But we must be ex-

cused for preferring Josephus' account to that of the Cardinal, for which he produces no evidence. Josephus informs us, that Agrippa, after he had reigned three years over all Judea, went down to Cesarea to celebrate solemn games in honor of Cæsar; understanding that a festival had been appointed to make vows for his health. The following account of the death of Herod is given by the same historian, and agrees with what we have in the New Testament.—"On the second day of the shows, he put on a garment wholly of silver, and of a texture truly wonderful, and came into the theatre early in the morning; at which time, the silver of his garment being illuminated by the fresh reflection of the rays of the sun upon it, shone after a surprising manner, and was so resplendent as to spread an horror over those that looked intently upon him: and presently his flatterers cried, one from one place, and another from another, (though not for his good,) that "he was a god."—Upon this, the king did neither rebuke them, nor reject their impious flattery. But, as he presently afterwards looked up, he saw an owl, and immediately understood that this bird was the messenger of evil tidings. A severe pain also arose in his belly, and began in a most violent manner. And when he had been quite worn out by pain in his belly for five days, he departed this life, being in the fifty-fourth year of his age."*—The correspondence between this and the scripture account of this event, is apparent. The scripture indeed says he was eaten of worms, of which there is no mention in Josephus; but the appearance of these is not unusual in violent affections of the bowels, and other complaints which cause putrefaction.

Of the dearth in the days of Claudius Cæsar.—This is mentioned Acts, xi. 22—30. It was foretold by the prophet Agabus to the disciples at Antioch, to excite them to send relief to their brethren in Judea; and it took place according to the prediction.—We are informed by Josephus of a severe famine which happened in Judea during the reign of Claudius; upon which occasion Helena, the Queen of Adiabene, and her son, who had both newly embraced the Jewish religion, brought corn from Egypt, and distributed it among the inhabitants of Jerusalem.† But there is reason to doubt if this be the particular famine referred unto in the New Testament. Different writers have produced arguments to show that it was

* Antiq. b. xix. ch. vi. § 1. What is here said of the Nazarites may serve to illustrate Acts xxi. 24. 26.

† Annales in anno xlv. num. x.

* Antiq. b. xix. ch. viii. § 2.

† Antiq. b. xx. ch. ii. § 5. ch. v. § 2.

not.* There was a famine which is mentioned by different historians, which took place on the second year of Claudius — This famine was so severe, that it produced a scarcity of food for a long time afterwards; and so much did the people feel under it, that they lost all reverence for the Emperor†.

It is pleaded, that this was the famine foretold by Agabus, because it took place before what is related as to the actions and death of Herod Agrippa, and because it was general, and not confined to Judea, as the one mentioned by Josephus seems to have been. If the famine took place in the second year of Claudius, then it was a sabbatical year, on which the land of Judea lay uncultivated; which must have rendered it more hard on the Jews. After all, the opinion of Witsius seems most eligible, who considers the prediction of Agabus as extending to all that scarcity of provisions which existed during the fourteen years which Claudius Cæsar reigned, and which visited one country at one time, and another at another, until every one had its share.‡

When the disciples at Antioch heard that a dearth should take place, they determined to send assistance to their brethren in Judea. As the famine was to be through the whole world, and not confined to Judea, it may be a subject of inquiry, why assistance was to be sent only to those who lived in Judea. — The reason of this seems to be, that their wealth consisted entirely in the produce of their land, and having little or no commerce nor trade, when their crops failed, they were reduced to the greatest straits. "As for ourselves," says Josephus, in defending his countrymen against Apion, "we neither inhabit a maritine country, nor do we delight in merchandise, nor in such a mixture with other men as arises from it; but the cities we dwell in are remote from the sea, and, having a fruitful country for our habitation, we take pains in cultivating that only."§

Of the Egyptian Imposter.—Upon occasion of the tumult raised in Jerusalem, when a guard of soldiers was conveying Paul to the castle, the chief captain said unto him, "Art not thou that Egyptian, which, before these days, madest an uproar, and leddest out into the wilderness four thousand men that were murderers?" Acts xxi. 38. Josephus, both in his Antiquities, and in his Jewish Wars, gives an account of this in-

surrection, headed by an Egyptian. His account is to this purpose; That an Egyptian pretended to be a prophet, collected together thirty thousand of the common people, brought them from the wilderness to the Mount of Olives, and promised to them that the walls of Jerusalem would fall down, and give them admittance into the city; but, that Felix came upon him with an army, and defeated him, having slain two hundred of his men, and taken two hundred prisoners. The Egyptian escaped from the battle, and did not afterwards appear.* It is observable, that in the New Testament the Egyptian is said to have been accompanied with murderers; the original word *Sicarii* is the very denomination which Josephus uniformly applies to those desperadoes, who, in great numbers, infested Judea about this time, and went about with concealed poignards or daggers, committing murders.— This imposter was one of the many false Christs and false prophets, who actually appeared before the destruction of Jerusalem, according to the prediction of our Saviour, and against whom he warned his disciples, "if they shall say unto you, Behold he is in the desert, go not forth," Matth xxiv 26. The only thing in which the account of Josephus differs from that of the inspired writer is, that the former says, that the Egyptian was accompanied with 30,000 men, the latter, that he had only 4000. If we were disposed to reconcile these two, we would say, that the chief captain spake of the number which followed the Egyptian into the wilderness, and Josephus of the army which he brought out of the wilderness, to besiege Jerusalem, after his followers had greatly increased. But there is reason to think, that Josephus has greatly over-rated the insurgents on this occasion. In his Jewish Wars he says, that they were 30,000; in his Antiquities, without mentioning the number of the whole, he says, that there were 200 killed, and as many taken prisoners. Now, is it probable, if their number had been so great, that such a small proportion of them would have fallen, considering that they would, in a great measure, be an unarmed and irregular rabble, and that the Roman army would be greatly incensed against them? The history of the Jewish Wars was the first of Josephus's works; and, in his Jewish Antiquities, he gave a more exact statement of many things of which he had been less accurately informed when he composed his former work.

* Basnage Exercit. anti. baron. p. 580. Witsius Melet. Leid. de gestis Pauli, sec. iii. 6.

† Dio. lib. 60. Suet. cap. 15.

‡ De Gestis Pauli, sec. iii. 6.

§ Against Apion, b. i. 12.

* Antiq. b. xx. ch. viii. § 6. Jewish Wars, b. ii. chap. xiii. § 5.

Of Felix.—Josephus informs us, that Claudius a few years before his death, appointed Felix procurator of Judea, and that he continued in that office during the first part of the reign of Nero. This answers to the time in which he is mentioned as governor of Judea, in the New Testament, Acts, xxiii. xxiv. Luke informs us, that he had to “wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess.” In conformity to this, Josephus mentions, that he married Drusilla, the daughter of Agrippa the Great, and sister of Agrippa Junior.* When Paul appeared the second time before Felix, and “reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled,” conscience bearing witness that he was guilty of a breach of temperance and righteousness, and that he had reason to fear the judgment to come. As an evidence of his being a corrupt judge, the scripture mentions, that he expected Paul would give him a bribe to purchase his liberty. From Josephus we learn, that he was of an abandoned character. Drusilla, the sister of Agrippa Junior, was given in marriage to Arizus King of Emesa, upon his consenting to be circumcised. When Felix came as procurator of Judea, he saw Drusilla, and having fallen in love with her, he enticed her to forsake her husband, and to marry him. In this adulterous connection, was Felix living with Drusilla at the time that Paul appeared before him; a circumstance which illustrates the faithfulness of that Apostle in preaching “temperance” unto Felix, not afraid of the power which he had over him as a judge, and of the abuse which he might make of it, in passing an unjust sentence against him. Felix was also devoid of faith, and guilty of murder, having introduced the *sicarii* or robbers into Jerusalem, who killed the high-priest, and avenged his private quarrels.†

It may farther be added on this head, that Josephus says, almost in the words of scripture, that Porcius Festus was sent as successor to Felix.‡ At the time that he went out of office, “Felix, willing to shew the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound,” Acts, xxiv. 27. It was customary for the governors to perform some action, often a very unjust one, to gratify the people, both on their leaving their office, and upon their first entering upon it. Thus Festus, at his first entrance, to gratify the Jews, proposed that Paul should go up from Cesarea to Jerusalem to be judged, Acts, xxv. 9. See an

instance of this in Josephus, *Antiq. xx. ch. ix. § 5.* But, in addition to this, Felix, in the present instance, might have another reason. We learn from Josephus, that, upon his removal from office, “the principal of the Jewish inhabitants of Cesarea went up to Rome to accuse Felix, on account of his maladministration; and that he was in great danger of being brought to punishment.”—It is probable, that it was to soothe their irritation against him, and to prevail on them to desist from this prosecution, that he gratified the zealots by leaving Paul in prison.

Of Agrippa the Younger.—This is the person who is mentioned in Acts, xxv. and xxvi. and the son of Herod Agrippa, mentioned in the xiith chapter of the same book. Being a youth at Rome when his father died, Claudius Cæsar did not think it proper to put him in possession of his father’s dominions, particularly as Judea was beginning to be very tumultuous and ungovernable. This was the reason why we read of governors or procurators in Judea, from the death of Herod Agrippa, as there were also before his reign from the death of his grandfather Herod the Great. When Agrippa the younger grew up, the Emperor bestowed upon him the kingdom of Chalcis on the death of his uncle, and afterwards exchanged this for a greater kingdom, including the tetrarchy of Phillip, the kingdom of Lysanias, unto which Nero added some cities in Galilee, at the same time Judea, properly so called, was continued under a Roman procurator.† In agreeableness to this, he is called in the New Testament, *King Agrippa*, but never king of the Jews.

The character of this prince for wisdom, justice, and moderation, is superior to that of his father, who, by his ambition and exploits, gained to himself the surname of *Great*.—Although, properly speaking, he had no authority in Judea, yet his exact knowledge of Jewish customs and laws, the favour which he maintained with the Roman Emperors, and the right he obtained of appointing the high-priest, occasioned him to be often in that country, and gave him great influence in its affairs. Hence we find him present at the trial of Paul; and this Apostle declares him to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews;” yea, he addresses him thus: “The king knoweth of these things, before whom I speak freely. King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest?—Bernice, who was present also on this occa-

* *Antiq. b. xx. ch. vii. § 1. 2.*

† *Antiq. b. xx. ch. vii. § 1. 2. ch. viii. § 5.*

‡ *§ 9.*

* *Antiq. b. xx. ch. ix. § 9.*

† *Jewish Wars. b. ii. ch. xii. § 8. ch. xiii. § 2.*

sion, was, as we are informed by Josephus, the sister of Agrippa.*

Many other passages might be produced from the Jewish historian, to illustrate or confirm the contents of the New Testament; but it shall suffice to have referred to a few of the most striking. PHILISTOR.

[From the *Critica Biblica*.]

SCRIPTURE PROPHECY DISTINGUISHED
FROM HEATHEN ORACLES.

Every thing that is excellent and desirable has its counterfeit. Revelation has sometimes had her claims denied; and sometimes her majesty imitated; but unaltered by any mode of attack, and disdaining to shrink from inquiry, she submits her pure gold to the crucible of truth, secure that it shall come brighter from that furnace which detects and consumes baser metals. Some have endeavored to add to the volume of inspiration, and some to take away from it: and one of the strongest evidences of its authenticity is, that it remains what it was from the beginning, uninjured by all the hands through which it has passed, and unimpaired by the assaults of all those adversaries who have in their turns been vanquished by time and by death. Scripture Prophecy has been imitated; and the friends of scepticism urge against it, what they profess to deem a counterpart in heathen oracles; and because these were for the most part built upon the chicanery of interested men, they have ungenerously attempted to prove that all predictions of futurity are founded upon the same basis, rise from the same source, and proceed from cunning on the one hand, and from ignorance and superstition on the other. In entering upon a discussion of Scripture Prophecy, it can neither be unnecessary nor unprofitable to discriminate between things which essentially differ, but which the art or the ignorance of man has often blended. Our leading object at present, therefore, is this: and we shall blend with this discussion some remarks respecting the distance between the prophecy and the events predicted in most instances; as also the uses to which the doctrine of Scripture Prophecy, if it can be established, may be applied. We shall endeavour,

To distinguish Scripture Prophecy from heathen oracles.

1. Before this difference is specified, it may be proper to say something respecting the nature and the number of the heathen oracles.

In respect to their NATURE, there has been large discussion, and considerable diversity of opinion. Some writers have ascribed them to the influence of demons; and others altogether to the cunning and artifice of the persons employed to deliver them.—While there was indisputably much of the last, we confess that we are also inclined to admit something of the former. We give it only as our *opinion*, upon which, as upon the strength or weakness of every other point advanced, the reader will form his own judgment, after having candidly weighed the evidences produced, and the reasons assigned. If the existence of evil spirits be admitted, (which cannot now form a subject of discussion,) there is reason to conclude that the heathen world was peculiarly under their influence. The lands which the light of Revelation had not visited, may be considered as the seat of empire to the powers of darkness. There are two reasons why, in some striking cases, we imagine the answers delivered by the heathen oracles to be prompted by demons.

First, because in some few instances, a knowledge beyond the compass of human ability was displayed. There were two memorable trials made of the veracity of oracles, and admitted by no less an historian than Rollin,* whose depth of research, accuracy of statement, and fidelity of narration, stand unrivalled. Cræsus commanded his ambassador to ask the oracle, at a stated time determined between them, what the monarch was doing. The oracle of Delphos replied, that “he was causing a tortoise and a lamb to be dressed in a vessel of brass”—which was the fact. At Heliopolis a similar trial was made by the emperor Trajan. He sent a letter sealed up, to which he demanded an answer without its being opened. The oracle demanded a blank paper to be folded, sealed, and delivered to him; to the no small surprise of the emperor, who had written nothing in the letter which he had sent to the oracle. It is not necessary to suppose that in general demons have a knowledge of futurity: but in some instances it might be permitted as a punishment for the blindness and idolatry, the pride and superstition of the heathen world. The early Fathers have generally maintained this sentiment; and their opinion ought to have some weight, as they lived near the scene of action, and on the brink of the time in question. Nor is a partial impulse upon the minds of men by evil spirits more extraordinary or unreasonable, than the possession which in the time of our Lord prevailed over the bodies of men; and the doctrine of

* Jewish Wars, b. ii. ch. xv. § 1.

* Rollin's Anc. Hist. vol. i. p. 54, preface.

actual possession has never in our opinion, been overthrown.

Secondly, heathen oracles ceased at an early stage of the propagation of Christianity; an instance, we conceive, of the fall of the kingdom of Satan. This sentiment has been opposed, and it has been asserted, that their cessation was gradual, and that they fell into disrepute as the superior light of Christianity extended, but not for a considerable time after its prevalence in the world. It has been said that the emperor Julian consulted them; which he could not do except they had been in existence long after the preaching of Christianity. But it has been proved that Julian "had recourse to magical operations," quite a distinct thing from the consultation of oracles, and that it was "because oracles had already ceased: for he bewailed the loss of them, and assigned weak reasons for that loss, which St. Cyrill has vigorously refuted; adding that he never could have offered such, but from an unwillingness to acknowledge, that when the world had received the light of Christ, the dominion of the Devil was at an end."* It has been further added, as an evidence that heathen oracles continued after the propagation of Christianity, that the Christian emperors issued laws against them; but it has also been justly observed, that "the edicts of those princes do not prove that oracles actually existed in their times, any more than that they ceased in consequence of their laws;" and that "it is certain that these oracles were, for the most part, extinct before the conversion of Constantine." The superstition and predilection of the multitude of oracles might exist long after the oracles themselves; for men slowly resign prejudices of all sorts, and religious prejudices especially. The laws of these emperors were designed probably to subdue these prejudices, or at least to control their injurious operation. The evidences on both sides ought to be carefully examined and impartially balanced; and it is probable, that facts have been seen magnified or diminished according to the prejudices of respective writers on both sides of the question. Tertullian offers that any Christian, on pain of death, shall engage to make these oracles confess themselves demons.† Juvenal speaks of the cessation of

the Delphian oracle.* Lucan bears the same testimony.† Theodoret speaks of the decline of the same oracle; and its reputed answer to the consultations of Julian is well known.‡ "Tell the king—the well constructed palace is fallen to the ground:—Phœbus has neither a cottage, nor the prophetic laurel, nor the speaking fountain;—and even the beautiful water is extinct."

But although we ascribe some of these oracles to the agency of demons, we are willing to allow that the most of them were the productions of art and cunning. It is universally admitted that the Delphian priestess suffered herself to be corrupted by presents, and framed her answers accordingly. Demosthenes publicly accused the Pythian oracle of being bribed to speak in favor of Philip; and charged the Athenians to give no credit to her.§

With regard to NUMBER, they were so multiplied that it will not be possible to do more than to recapitulate a few leading features, which have been traced by various writers, of the principal of them. The most considerable was the oracle of Apollo at Delphos, an ancient city of Phocis in Achaia, situated upon a declivity about the middle of Mount Parnassus, and surrounded by precipices.

The oracle of Dodona|| was consecrated to Jupiter: who is also deemed the father of oracles; although he yielded in the renown and popularity of his predictions to the Delphian Apollo. The mode of answering inquiries at this seat of superstition, appears to have been, by hanging certain instruments on the tops of oaks, which when shaken by the wind gave a confused sound, the priests interpreting the noise as they thought proper.

* —Delphis oracula cessant. *Juv. Sat. VI. l. 554.*

† Non ullo secula dono

Nostra caret majore Deum, quam Delphica sedes

Quod siluit.

Luc. Lib. V.

‡ Εἰπας τῷ βασιλεῖ χαμαὶ πρὸς δαίδαλος αὐλά,

Οὐκέτι Φοῖβος ἔχει καλὴν βάν, ἡ μαντιδα δάφνην,

Οὐ γὰρ ἀνὰ λαλέσαν, ἀπέσβετο καὶ καλὸν ὕδωρ.

§ See Potter's *Antiq. of Greece*, vol. I. chap. ix. p. 232.

|| He said that "the Pythoness Phillipised."

|| Respecting this place there has been much controversy. Some place it in Thessaly, and some in Epirus. Those who adhere to Epirus, doubt whether it was in Thesprotia, or Chaonia. Some contend that there were two Dodonas; one in Thessaly and one in Epirus. Rollin calls it a city of the Molossians; and Archbishop Potter, after stating these different opinions, seems to agree with them.

* See *Ency. Brit.* vol. xiii. P. 1. Art. Oracle.

† Nisi se demones confessi fuerint, Christiano mentiri non audentes, ibidem illius Christiani prociacimi sanguinem fundite, *Tertull. Apologet.* p. 24. *Lutet. edit.* 1634.

The oracles of Trophonius in Bæotia, were also held in high estimation. After much ceremony the inquirers entered the cave, whence they returned melancholy and listless, stupified possibly by some vapour which might arise within it, and were a considerable time before they recovered, having, as they imagined, seen and heard wonderful things.

The whole amount of oracles in more or less repute in the heathen world, is estimated at not fewer than three hundred. It would be a wanton waste of time to enlarge upon the different characters and pretensions of these; especially as they are all inferior and subordinate to those which we have named, and selected as a specimen of the whole. But it is of more importance that we should mark,

2. The Distinctions subsisting between the best and wisest of these Oracles, and Scripture Prophecy. They are dissimilar in every leading point; and their highest pretensions, on the testimony of the history of their times, can never rank with the claims and the evidences of the sacred predictions.

The first distinction which we shall mark relates to the MANNER of their delivery.—When the Priestess had passed through the preparatory ceremonies, and had inhaled the celebrated vapour over which her tripod was placed, her gestures and sensations amounted to absolute madness. A trembling shook her whole frame; her looks were wild and distracted; she foamed at her mouth; her hair became erect; her shrieks and howlings filled the temple; and heathen historians add, that the building itself shook to its very foundations. During these fearful agitations, at certain intervals, unconnected words fell from her lips. These were carefully collected by the priests who surrounded her, and from them the oracle was framed. These distortions and this vehemence, were not peculiar to the priestess of Delphos, but seem universally to characterize heathen oracles. Lycophron represents Cassandra as infuriate in the same measure as this Pythian priestess is described by Lucan.* Heraclitus says, that “the declamations of the Sibyl were indecorous and ridiculous,” and that they were pronounced from a “raving mouth.”† Ammianus Marcellinus speaks of this violence as a proverbial notoriety.‡

* See also Lucan, lib. v.

† Ὡς μαινόμενῳ στόματι γέλασά καὶ ἀκαλῶσις αὐτὴν φεγγόμενη.

‡ Sibyllæ crebro se dicunt ardere, torrente vi magna flammarum. Amm. Marc. lib. xxi. in principio.

Consult on this subject, Rollin, vol. i. pref.;

Virgil describes, with his wonted force and eloquence, the vehemence and madness of the prophetess.* It required several days after she was reconducted to her cell, to recover her from her fatigue, and restore her exhausted frame to its wonted vigour.— Sometimes her life was the forfeit of her exertions; and this excessive raving was followed by sudden death.

To this madness stands opposed the calm and dignified manners of the prophets, when they foretold future events. It is true that they were elevated by the majesty of their subject. They were wrapt and inspired by the visions of the Almighty. They were moved with pity or with indignation, when men trifled with the judgments pronounced. Sanctioned by the usages of the times, and transported by the force of their commission, they rent their clothes and their hair; they stamped with their foot, and smote upon their thigh. But they maintained the calm possession of all their faculties; and never discovered the characteristics of a maniac.— They were zealous but not furious: and their energy was distinct from raving. We cannot but think that God himself marks strongly the contrast between the manner of delivering oracles, and the calm possession of their reasoning faculties, the majesty, the truth of his prophets. “I am the Lord that maketh all things, and stretcheth forth the heavens alone, that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself. That frustrateth the tokens of liars, and maketh diviners mad; that turneth wise men backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish: That confirmeth the word of my servant, and performeth the counsel of my messengers.”† In one word, the pronouncers of oracles were always transported out of themselves; and the prophets of the Lord always preserved a noble tranquility of deportment.

The second distinction which we shall point out relates to the TIME of their delivery. The oracles were issued only at stated periods. Their gods were not always propitious. At first the priestess of Delphos could be approached but once a year; afterwards she was accessible monthly. All days were not deemed proper; and upon some no answer could be obtained. Alexander wished to consult the oracle upon one of those unpropitious days; but was absolutely refused by the priestess. The conqueror of the world did not understand ceremony;

Potter's Antiq. of Greece, vol. i. p. 278.; Ep. Watson's Theolog. Tracts, vol. i. p. 314.

* See Virgil's Æn. lib. vi. v. 46—51.

† Isa. xlv. 24—26.

and thought that "nice customs should stoop to great kings." He dragged the struggling priestess, and seated her by force on the tripod, while she exclaimed, "My son, thou art invincible;" and Alexander declared that she might spare herself farther trouble, for *that* was an oracle entirely to his satisfaction.* We have already seen, that, as force could command the time, gold could occasionally dictate the answer; and this is a consideration worthy to be remarked and remembered; and which we shall not pass by as we pursue the distinctions evidently subsisting between this corrupted superstition and Scripture Prophecy.

Respecting the prophets of the Lord, we find none of this caution. No seasons were improper. They were always accessible; and to the devout inquirer God was always propitious. There was no delay attending the answer. Either he disdained to notice the application at all, when it came from such a character as Saul, whose iniquities had separated him from the divine favor; or the direction was vouchsafed immediately. Rank and wealth had no influence in framing the answer. The poor were often filled with joy, while the rich were sent empty away. Unrighteous kings were reproved with the fidelity, the plainness, and the severity of truth; and the prophets not unfrequently passed from the royal presence into a prison as a punishment for their sincerity. They often suffered, but they never stooped to flatter.

The Third distinction relates to the PLACE where they were delivered. The heathen oracles were delivered in secret and obscure places, in by-ways, in dark caverns, and from the inmost recesses of the temples.—Who does not perceive that such places were favorable to fraud? and that these very circumstances are of themselves sufficient to awaken suspicion? All was as mysterious and as blinded as possible. Pausanius, who consulted in person the oracle of Trophonius, after a long description of the ablutions and services previously required, represents at large the circumstances in which he was placed. He speaks of the visible and outward cave, not as a natural cavity, but as "built with the nicest mechanism and proportion." The entrance of this cavern has no steps, but the person who wishes to consult the oracle must provide himself with

a light and narrow ladder: and having descended this external cavern, which may be considered as a porch to the oracle; the cave itself of Trophonius is situated "between the roof and the pavement." "At the mouth of this, the descendant, having brought with him cakes dipped in honey, lies along on the ground, and shoves himself feet foremost into the cave; then he thrusts in his knees; after which the rest of his body is rolled along, by a force not unlike that of a great and rapid river, which overpowering a man with its vortex, tumbles him over head and ears. All that come within the approach of the oracle, have not their answers revealed in the same way.—Some gather their resolves by outward appearances; others by word of mouth. They all return the same way back with their feet foremost."* None ever lost their lives in this cavern, except one man, who meant to rob the sanctuary of the wealth deposited there by the superstitious. Every one returns, bewildered and stupified from some cause, from the cave. This is the testimony of Pausanius; and it is sufficiently explicit to discover how much of art and of chicanery might be practised in a place so constructed, upon those, who, being prepared for something supernatural, require very little to strengthen the delusion which their imagination was of itself ready to impose upon their senses.

Scripture Prophecy forms a striking and noble contrast to these pitiful expedients.—Here was no collusion, and no mystery. No cheat was attempted or practised on the senses. There were no secret avenues, no dark recesses, no obscure retreats.—All was open as the day. The prophets delivered their messages wherever and whenever they were required, and in the face of the world. Sometimes the predictions were delivered in the palaces of rebellious kings, and sometimes in the centre of devoted cities: sometimes in the prophet's house, and at others in the assembly of the Elders: but always openly. Does not God himself allude to this distinction between his own predictions, and the secrecy attending the delivery of heathen oracles, when he says, "*I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth?*"†

The fourth distinction relates to the CEREMONIES required and practised in the consultation of oracles. Vast preparations were made on every such occasion. The priestess herself was compelled to fast three days,

* On this point consult Plutarch, Græc. quest. 9.; Anc. Univ. Hist. vol. v. b. 1. note F. p. 610. Dublin edit. 1745; Potter's Antiq. vol. 1. chap. 9. p. 278. For the anecdote see Rollin's Anc. Hist. vol. 1. p. 51. Preface; and Eury. Brit. vol. xiii. Pt. 1. art. Oracle.

* Abp. Potter's Antiq. of Greece, vol. i. p. 291.

† Isa. xlv. 19.

to bathe in the fountain of Castalia, to drink copiously of the water, to shake the laurel tree that grew on its brink, and to chew some of its leaves. Sacrifices that lacked neither splendor nor solemnity were presented and presented daily, till the omens were favorable and an answer was vouchsafed. Not an iota of the ceremonial prescribed was to be omitted; and a single informality would suspend the whole process, and rendering nugatory all that preceded, compel all the services to recommence.* All the majesty of form was maintained, but alas! the spirit of religion was not there. It was also expected that those who consulted the oracle should make large presents to the god, whose name sanctioned the avarice of the priests; so that the temple of Delphos surpassed all others in riches, splendour, and magnificence.† Nor was this requisition peculiar to the shrine of Apollo; it was an essential part of the system, throughout the whole heathen world, that whoever would consult the pretended divinity, must fee the selfish priest.

We discern no such parade in the dispensation of Scripture Prophecy. When God was approached, only the usual sacrifices were presented; and he was frequently consulted without any previous offering. When sacrifices were presented it was not with a view to propitiate the Deity, which was the sole object of the ceremonies of the heathens. Till the answer was given the god was adored; and when it was once obtained, he was forgotten. Presents were sometimes sent to the prophets; but these were tokens of personal respect to them, and were not intended as an offering to God. They were never required; and were always refused when they were intended as a recompense to the prophet in his sacred character, or as a reward for the performance of his duty. Thus Elisha refused peremptorily any present from Naaman. Frequently the prophets of the Lord suffered persecution even to death, for the integrity with which they pronounced the truths committed to their trust. No king could corrupt them. Ahab said of Micaiah, "I hate him, for he doth not prophecy good concerning me, but evil." Balaam, whose heart was the seat of avarice, did not dare, so long as God chose to employ him as an instrument, to suffer himself to be corrupted by presents. He was constrained to abjure the gold which he devoured with his wishes, when it was offered

as a bribe, that he should deliver a favorable oracle. "If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord, to do less or more." To what sufferings and imprisonments did Jeremiah's predictions expose him! Samuel, at the end of a long administration as a prophet, and as a judge, could say, "Behold, here I am; witness against me before the Lord and before his anointed; whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any *bribe*, to blind mine eyes therewith? and I will restore it to you. And the people said, thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken ought of any man's hand. And he said unto them, the Lord is witness against you, and his anointed is witness this day, that ye have not found ought in my hand. And they answered he is witness."* Which of the priests that conducted the heathen oracles, could make such an appeal? or produce, like the prophets of the Lord, a palm unstained by bribery?

The Fifth and the grand distinction relates to MATTER. Rollin has, with much justice and force, given a description of heathen oracles. He says, "their general characteristics were *ambiguity*, *obscurity*, and *convertibility*;" that is to say, the answer would agree with several various, and sometimes directly opposite events." The prediction was so framed that whatever should be the issue, the oracle might not lose its credit and popularity. There are two instances in point, which are also generally known; and they shall suffice as an illustration of this position. When Cræsus was about to invade the Medes and Persians, he consulted the oracle at Delphos as to the issue of his expedition. The answer was, "that by passing the river Helys, and making war upon the Persians, he would ruin a great empire." What empire? Was his own or that of the Medes to be ruined? One of these two opposite events was certain; and in either case the oracle would be right. Men are always ready to believe that which they wish. Cræsus flattered himself that the ruin of the Persians was intended. He made the attempt—lost his crown, and was on the point of losing his life. In like manner when Pyrrhus made war upon the Romans, he consulted the same oracle. With matchless address the answer was couched in a single line in

* Rollin's Anc. Hist. vol. i. Pref.; Anc. Univ. Hist. vol. v. p. 610.

† Abp. Potter's Antiq. of Greece, vol. i. p. 278, 279.

* 1 Sam. xii. 3—5.

Latin,* which cannot be so rendered into English as to express the equivocal construction of the original: but from the arrangement of the words, it may be read, either "that Pyrrhus should conquer the Romans;" or "that the Romans should conquer Pyrrhus." The issue is well known: Pyrrhus returned, mortified and defeated, to his country, after a long and disastrous struggle.—Tertullian appeals to these instances in charging the heathen oracles with subtle ambiguity;† and such was their general character.

The contrast to this darkness and equivocation will be found in the clearness and perspicuity of prophecy, as we pursue the future discussion of this interesting part of divine revelation. In general the prediction is so decisive, that the event appears only a transcript of the prophecy. Language capable of a double or changeable construction, is never employed: and when obscurity hovers over the prophecy, it arises from one of these three causes: either it is not accomplished, and has not received the interpretation of providence; or the history which should elucidate it has perished with the wrecks of time; or we are ignorant of the imagery, the customs, or the language itself, in which it is contained, and to which it relates. Those, therefore, who wish to draw a parallel between Scripture Prophecy and heathen oracles, for the sake of placing them upon the same basis, tracing them to the same source, and condemning them together, are acting unfairly dishonorably, and dishonestly by Revelation.‡

NAPHTALI.

"Naphtali is a hind let loose:

He giveth goodly words."—Gen. xlix. 21.

Concerning the precise import of this passage—whether the object of comparison be animal or botanical—commentators are by no means agreed. The following excellent remarks, from the pen of the late erudite editor of the Calmet, will remove the difficulties resulting from the rendering of our authorized English version.

That this passage requires illustration, will be evident, from a slight examination of its grammar, and import. "Naphtali is a *hind*"—a *hind* is a *female* deer: "he," the sign of the *masculine* gender, "giveth

goodly words." Naphtali is here both masculine and feminine; but in what sense can it be said of a deer, whether male or female, he giveth *words*? And how are these words *goodly*? When did a deer speak, and speak, too, with propriety and elocution? What idea may we gather from this phraseology? Where is the unity of the allusion, or the propriety of the parts? How does it correspond with nature, or with the subsequent situation, or history, of this tribe?

The versions ancient or modern, afford little assistance. The Vulgate, one of the Greek versions, the Persian, and the Arabic, concur in this rendering. Thee LXX. Bochart, Houbigant, Durell, Dathe, and Michaelis, render "Naphtali is a spreading (Terebinthine) tree, giving beautiful branches." This renders the simile uniform; but the symbol of a tree seems to be purposely reserved by the venerable patriarch for his son Joseph, who is compared to the boughs of a tree. Now Joseph would be assimilated to an *inferior* object, if Naphtali had been compared to a parent tree before him; the repetition, too, is very unlikely.

Those who support the Hebrew points, and opinion of the Masora critics, *i. e.* the present reading, support the former version, which is according to them. They say also, that the idea of a tree is too general, and not specific enough to become the characteristic of a tribe; since fertility, &c., which it implies, belonged equally to all the tribes. (Gen. xlix. 21.) This has engaged later interpreters to identify this tree as the Terebinthine.

It is certain, also, that the Hebrew *Ail*, is the usual name for a stag. The Greeks seemed to have changed this word, by prefixing a hard sounding letter, D, *Dial*.—Hence Hesychius says, *Διαλ την ελαφον Χαλδαιοι*: 'The Chaldeans call a deer *Dial*.' The Arabs write *jial*, *igial*, &c.

Having seen, though briefly, the embarrassment of interpreters, let us derive an explanation of this passage from Natural History.

1. It is likely, that *Aileh*, like our word *Deer*, may be applicable to either sex; though custom might appropriate it to one; as we do not always correctly, in common speech, distinguish the sexes of domestic animals, sheep, goats, horses, dogs, &c.: or of wild animals, rats, wolves, bears, &c.—So our word *deer* does not denote the *species*, as we have several kinds of deer, nor the sex, &c.; and the Greek *elaphos* denotes a deer, *i. e.* whether a *stag* or a *hind*. The Latin also looks the same way; *dama*,

* Aio te, Æacida, Romanos, vincere posse!

† In oraculis autem, quo ingenio ambiguitates temperant in eventus, sciunt Cæsi, sciunt Pyrrhi. Tertull. Apologet. p. 24. Lutet. edit. 1634. See also Rollin's Anc. Hist. vol. i. Pref. p. 54; Encyc. Brit. vol. xiii. Part I. Art. Oracle.

‡ Collyer's Lect. on Script. Prophecy, pp. 1—62.

a deer, a fallow deer, whether buck or doe, and Dr. SHAW (*Travels*, 414, 4to.) understands the whole *genus* of deer, as included in the word *Ail*, though this *genus* comprises many *species*. Our professed naturalists, also accommodate themselves in their writings to this manner of expression — GOLDSMITH has a division "of the COW kind under which he includes *Bulls*, no doubt: but PENNANT is little short of unnatural or absurd, for under a division, "of the OX," he includes bulls and cows; but bulls or cows are not oxen, neither are oxen bulls or cows, but mutilations contrary to nature.

2. The word rendered *let loose* (*shelchek*) imports an active motion, not like that of the branches of a tree, which, however freely they wave, yet continued attached to the parent stem, but an *emission*, a *dismissal*, a *sending forth*; in the present case a *roaming*—roaming at liberty.

3. *He giveth*.—The term may denote *shooting forth*: it expresses production; as of the earth, which shoots forth, yields her increase. (Lev. xxiv. 4.) So trees shoot forth branches, (Ps. viii. 7.; Prov. xii. 12.;) and so to *place*, *set*, or *appoint*.

4. *Goodly words*.—Other versions render "beautiful branches," and we acquiesce in this idea. The word rendered *goodly* signifies *majestic*, *noble*, *grand*, *magnificent*: and that rendered *branches* radically signifies to *diverge*, to *spread about*. The passage, translated on these principles, will read thus—

Naphtali is a Deer roaming at liberty.
He shooteth forth noble branches, (*majestic antlers*.)

The English word *branches* is applied to the Stag, with exactly the same allusion as the Hebrew word: the French say *bois* (wood) for a Stag's horns. The horns of a Stag are annually shed, and re-produced; they are ample if his pasturage has been plentiful and nutritious; or are stinted in their growth, if his food has been sparing, or deficient in nourishment. Buffon reasons at length on this subject, *Art. CERF*.—"There is so intimate a relation between nutrition and the production of the antlers, &c. that we have formerly established its *entire dependance on a superabundance of nourishment*. In animals in general, and in the Stag in particular, this superabundance shows itself by the most evident effects; it produces the horns, the swelling of the throat, the accretion of fat, &c. After the first year, in the month of May, the horns begin to shoot, and form two projections, which lengthen and harden

in proportion as the animal takes nourishment. This effect (of nourishment) appears especially on the summit of the head, where it manifests itself more than every where else, by the production of the horns. Another proof that the production of the horns arises wholly from the superabundance of nourishment, is the difference which is found between the horns of Stags of the same age, of which some are very thick and spreading, while others are thin and slender, which depends absolutely on the quantity of nourishment; for a Stag which inhabits a plentiful country, where he feeds at his will, where he is not molested by dogs or by men; where, having eaten quietly, he may afterwards ruminate at his ease, will always shew a head beautiful, high and spreading; palms large and well furnished: the stem of his horns thick, well pearly, with numerous antlers, long and strong: whereas, he who inhabits a country where he has neither quiet nor nourishment sufficient, will show but an impoverished head, few antlers, and feeble stems; INSO-MUCH, THAT IT IS ALWAYS EASY TO DETERMINE BY EXAMINING THE HEAD OF A STAG, WHETHER HE INHABITS A PLENTIFUL AND QUIET COUNTRY, AND WHETHER HE HAS BEEN WELL OR ILL FED."

We now direct these remarks to the prediction of Jacob: "Naphtali shall inhabit a country so rich, so fertile, so quiet, so unmolested, that, after having fed to the full, on the most nutritious pasturage, he shall shoot out branches, *i. e.* antlers, &c., of the most majestic magnitude." Thus does the patriarch denote the happy lot of Naphtali; not directly but indirectly: not by the energy of immediate description, but by inevitable inference, arising from observation of its effects. In fact the lot of this tribe was rich in pasture, and "his soil," as CALMET observes, "was very fruitful in corn and oil." So that we have both correct verbal propriety, and subsequent fulfilment of the prophecy, in favor of this interpretation.

The residence of Naphtali was a beautiful woodland country; it extended to Mount Lebanon, and produced fruits of every sort. Moses says (Deut. xxxiii. 23.) Naphtali shall enjoy abundance of favor, and be filled with the blessings of the Lord. Josephus (*De Bello*, lib. iii. cap. 2.) speaks highly of the fertility of Galilee, which comprised the lot of Naphtali; and, *de Vita sua*. p. 1017., he reckons two hundred and fourteen towns in this province.

"We consider the source of the Jordan as rising in the territory of Naphtali; and

from the name of the city near which it rose, *Paneas*, (thought to originate from the deity *Pan*,) may be inferred the nature of the country; for *Pan*, as the god of rural economies, delighted in woodlands, forests, groves, &c.—and William, Archbishop of Tyre, in his “History of the Holy Wars,” (*lib. xviii. cap. 2.*) informs us, that there was around this city a vast forest, called in his time the forest of *Paneades*. It was adapted to feed and fatten flocks; and a prodigious number of Arabs and Turcomans, after a convention of peace with Godfrey of Boulogne, by permission of that hero, entered and resided in this forest, with their flocks and cattle; among which, says the historian, there was an infinite number of horses.

This forest extended even to Mount Hermon, as the writer last quoted observes; and he supposes it to be a part or continuation of the famous forest of Lebanon. It needs little proof that such a country was likely to yield abundance of nourishment for Deer, which might display its prolific effects in the growth and magnitude of the horns, and their branches; so that this country might *literally* fulfil the Patriarch’s blessing; which is not always to be expected in *figurative* language. It may be added, that about a mile distant from *Paneas*, stood Laish or Dan, the inhabitants of which dwelt careless, quiet and secure, (*Judges xviii. 7.*) which implies a plentiful country, to say the least.

Of the adjacent district of Kesroan, which Volney tells us is similar to this side of Mount Lebanon, Le Roque says, (p. 220.) “Nothing equals the fertility of the lands in Kesroan: mulberry-trees for the silk-worms; vineyards, yielding excellent wine; olive-trees tall as oaks; meadows, pasturages, corn, and fruit of all kinds. Such are the riches of this agreeable country, which besides abounds in cattle, large and small, in birds of game, and in *beasts of chase*. So beautiful a country, situated in a climate which I think is the mildest and most temperate of Syria, seems to contribute, in some manner, to the kindness of disposition, to the gentle inclinations, and to the praiseworthy manners of the inhabitants.”

He proceeds to say yet stronger things of the inhabitants of that country, whereof he is particularly speaking; but, I presume, what has been quoted, sufficiently justifies the patriarch Jacob in allegorizing the character and the situation of Naphtali by allusion to a Deer, rather than to any wild

beast of a savage and ferocious nature; as he does some of his other children.

It has been supposed, that the branching horns of this Deer allegorically denote fertility in children; and remarked, that though only four sons are reckoned to Naphtali, when he went down to Egypt, (*Gen. xli. 24.*;) yet his tribe at the exodus numbered above fifty thousand men.

There is then no necessity for recurring to the simile of a Tree, in order to reduce this passage to clear and simple meaning: neither are we obliged to retain the mistaken rendering of our public translation, which presents an *impossibility*, and a *contradiction*.*—*lb.*

[From the Southern Religious Telegraph.]

THE IMPRISONED MISSIONARIES.

MR. EDITOR,—I take the liberty of enclosing for publication, the proceedings of the Synod of North Carolina in relation to certain missionaries in the State of Georgia.

I agree in opinion with those who think that this subject in all its details and bearings, ought to be kept constantly before the public; for when it is fully understood and believed, the result must be, one general burst of honest indignation through the whole length and breadth of the land.

The stab which has been given to our national reputation is, I apprehend, too serious, afflictive and humiliating to be regarded with indifference.

If such oppression and outrages are to be met by the great body of the American people with silence and tame submission, then I confess I have been mistaken either in my views of the affair alluded to, or in the character of the country which has given me birth.

CIVIS.

October 25, 1831.

The Synod of North Carolina in the exercise of a right which they possess in common with their fellow citizens, of freely and fearlessly expressing their views in relation to public measures and events which affect the honor, the dignity, and christian character of their beloved country, feel it to be a duty which they owe to themselves and to

* Fragments supplementary to Calmet: Nat. Hist. pp. 30—32. We embrace the present opportunity of acknowledging our obligations to Mr. Charles Taylor, who has given us permission to reprint such parts of the writings of his late father as may be deemed desirable: a liberty of which we shall frequently avail ourselves, knowing that the originals are placed beyond the reach of many of our readers.

that part of the community which they represent, to notice with expressions of deep regret and unqualified remonstrance, the treatment to which certain christian missionaries of different religious denominations have, under form of legal process, recently been subjected in the State of Georgia.

Having examined the subject as presented to them through the medium of the press, and presuming that the details which have been given to the public are substantially correct, they are constrained to say, that in the case alluded to there has been a spectacle exhibited more shameful and shocking than any within their recollection, which has hitherto disgraced the annals of our free institutions.

To the honorable and high-minded authorities of their sister state, they would say, respectfully in the words of the eloquent DESEZE, one of the learned council who defended Louis the Sixteenth on his last trial,

'Recollect, that history will judge your judgment.'

And when the political agitations of the day shall have subsided, and when reason and humanity shall have resumed their ascendancy over the baser passions of the human mind, the Synod cannot but believe that the transactions of the summer of 1831 will be remembered *only* to be associated with the fell deeds of the dark ages, when tyranny and oppression were deemed no crimes, and when the principles of toleration and the rights of conscience were but imperfectly understood and scarcely recognized: *Therefore,*

Resolved, I. That the unrestrained insults—wanton indignities, and brutal cruelties to which some of the missionaries were subjected after their arrest, by individuals of the Georgia escort, savor more of the lawless barbarities of an Algerine banditti, than of the customary decencies and civilities of an American Guard.

II. That the severity of the sentence which, according to the laws of the state, has consigned to imprisonment and hard labor for the term of four years, some of the missionaries in question, can find no apology either in the moral turpitude of their general character, or in the heinousness of the offences which they have committed, but must be ascribed to the violence of party politics and imbibed feelings displaying themselves in the arbitrary enactments of a high-handed dominion.

III. That the following assertion found in a letter bearing the signature of the Executive of the state, namely,

"The missionaries of the different religious societies stationed among the Indians, had found their situations *too lucrative* to give them up willingly"—contains an insinuation altogether gratuitous, and unworthy the high station whence it proceeds: and until the contrary is made to appear, must be regarded as ungenerous and unfounded.

IV. That the Synod recommend to their churches and to christians generally, to unite (especially at the Monthly Concert) in fervent prayer to God, that he would direct and sustain by his Almighty power and grace, the missionaries of the cross of Christ in the State of Georgia, who have been traduced and persecuted for righteousness' sake. That he would pardon the sin of all concerned in the transactions alluded to, and that he would not lay their sins to the charge of our beloved country.

[From the Presbyterian.]

A PLEA FOR PROTESTANTISM.

MR. EDITOR,—The following strong appeal to Protestants is an extract from a speech, delivered on the occasion of erecting, not long since, in Glasgow, a monument to the memory of John Knox, the reformer, by Rev. Dr. Dick, Professor of Theology in Glasgow, of the secession church. I trust your readers will duly appreciate the sentiments of this extract.

Dr. Dick observes,

"In vain do we celebrate the memory of Knox, if we do not duly appreciate, and firmly maintain the religious principles, which through the divine blessing, he established in our country; not because they were taught by him, but because they are consonant to the Scriptures of truth, and exhibit the only foundation of human hope, the only rule to regulate our conduct towards God and towards man—The religion of Protestants is the religion of the Bible. The transactions of this day, Sir, will, I trust, have the effect to revive our zeal, to make us more deeply sensible of the blessings of the Reformation, and to excite us to watch over them with jealous care, as a sacred trust to be handed down to succeeding generations. It is to be feared, that not a few Protestants do not feel that cordial affection for their religion, and give it that decided preference to which it is entitled.—What can we think when we hear some of them telling us, that all religions are equally good,—that popery is merely a modification of our common religion,—that Papists differ from us only in some idle ceremonies, which might well be dispensed with—and

that popery is gradually losing its worst features and is approximating nearer to the truth? Is this the language of sincere and enlightened Protestants? Popery is an infallible religion, and cannot be improved; the moment it should admit of improvement, it would become *felo de se*,—it would drop its lofty claims to implicit submission; its decrees would no longer be oracles; and every man would be at liberty to appeal from its decisions to the standard of Scripture. But this, we are all aware, would be a death blow to popery. Let Protestants plead, if they will, for the toleration of papists; let them plead for the concession of political power to them, if they deem it consistent with the public safety; but let them not, with a view to strengthen their argument, proceed to palliate the evils of their religion and to conceal its hideous deformities with the varnish of a spurious liberality. The Church of Rome is, at this moment, the same in principle and spirit that she always was; and if any man should doubt this assertion, I would refer him to the disgusting scenes of bigotry and violence lately exhibited in Ireland, to say nothing of Catholic countries abroad; and what the Church of Rome now is, she will continue to be, till the awful hour, when the voice shall be heard, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and shall arise no more." Let us pity the blinded followers of anti-christ, and pray that their eyes may be opened; but let us not forget, that the Scriptures make use of every term of detestation and abhorrence in describing their religion; let us, whether churchmen or dissenters, unite in the defence of our own religion, for which our fathers nobly contended. When they came forward to vindicate our christian liberty, they had to encounter a domineering and intolerant priesthood, and a government which was too ready to lend its aid to uphold the reigning superstition. They suffered in the cause, and some of them sealed their testimony with their blood. Their relics have not been preserved: when persecution chased their spirits up to heaven, their ashes were scattered by the wind.—But we feel how deeply we are indebted to them, and their names awaken in our bosoms sentiments of admiration and gratitude. May the memory of their Christian heroism excite us to tread in their steps."

HUMAN DEPRAVITY AND INABILITY.

As the sincere christian, set never so many *hindrances* and *discouragements* before him, yet (being under the *law of the Spir-*

it) he will *be* and *do good*, so, *e contra*, the man that is destitute of grace, set what *hindrances* and *discouragements* you will before him, yet (being under the *law of sin*,) he will *be* and *do evil*. Let the *threatenings* of the *law* of God stand in his way, (like the *angel* with a *drawn sword* in his hand,) yet *he'll sin*; let the *sceptre* of the *gospel* be held out to him, yet *he'll sin*; set the *love, grace, mercy* of God, before him, yet *he'll sin*; set the *wrath, justice, sovereignty* of God before him, yet *he'll sin*; set the *death, sufferings, agonies, wounds, blood* of the Lord Jesus before him, yet *he'll sin*; let *conscience* smite him, let *word, ministers, christians* reprove him, yet *he'll sin*; let him *resolve, purpose, vow, promise, covenant*, yet *he'll sin*; tell him of *heaven or hell*, that he'll *waste his estate, impair his health, undo his family, ruin his body, nay his precious soul*, 'tis all one, yet *he'll sin*; come *plague, pestilence, war, fire*, yet *he'll sin*; set the *law of scripture* before him, yet *he'll sin*; nay, (as to *some acts*) set the *very law of nature* before him, yet *he'll sin*. DR. JACOMB.

ECCLESIASTICAL RECORD.

On the 27th of Oct. (last) the Rev. Duncan Stalker was installed pastor of the Associate congregation of North Argyle, by the Associate Presbytery of Cambridge. The Rev. J. P. Miller preached from Ezek. xxxiii. 7. The questions in the FORMULA were proposed by Rev. A. Gordon; and the charges to minister and people were delivered by Rev. Dr. Bullions. (The sermon preached on the above occasion will appear in the next No. of the Monitor.)

On the 17th ult. the Associate Presbytery of Albany installed the Rev. James Irvine in the 2nd Associate congregation in the city of New York.—Sermon by the Rev. James Martin, from John v. 2—4. Charges by the Rev. Peter Campbell.

At the same meeting the Presbytery received Mr. Graham, a Licentiate from the Synod of Original Seceders, (Scotland) and gave him appointments to preach, in their vacancies, the everlasting Gospel.

IRISH EDUCATION.

His Majesty's Ministers have announced their intention of Discontinuing the Grant of £25,000, which has been annually made to the Irish Education Society, meeting in Kildare Street, Dublin; and that it is their design to form an Institution, under the direction of a board of Protestants and Catholics, in which general instruction shall be imparted to all children without distinction, and religious instruction by their respective Ministers at certain appointed times.

In addition to the ministers and itinerating preachers of the Associate church, who are authorized to receive subscriptions and money, and give receipts, the following persons are authorized to act as agents:

Wm. Stevenson, Jun., Cambridge, Washington
Co. N. Y.
James M'Lelland, New-York City.
George M'Queen, Esq. Schenectady.
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A number of extra copies of volume eight are being printed under the expectation that they will be called for.

TERMS \$2 00 per annum, payable in advance or at the annual meeting of the Associate Synod.

* * All letters relating to the Monitor, whether they contain communications for our pages, or names of subscribers, or remittances of money, should be addressed to B. D. PACKARD & Co. or to CHAUNCEY WEBSTER, 71 State-street, Albany.

JUST PUBLISHED,

PREDESTINATION Calmly Considered from Principles of Reason, in consistency with the nature of things, and the Scriptures of Truth, in a series of letters to a friend. Also, Answers to Seven Queries on Predestination, by W. C. Tucker.

To which is appended the article on Divine Sovereignty, in volume 2, of the use of Sacred History, by James Jamieson, D. D. 252 pages large 18mo. Price 50 cts.

Copies of this invaluable book have been forwarded for sale to Andrew Munro, Cannonsburgh, Pa.; Rev. J. Beveridge, Philadelphia; Mr. John Duncan, 407 Broadway, New-York; Mr. Wm. Stevenson, Cambridge, N. Y.; Rev. Peter Campbell, Florida, N. Y.; Rev. J. G. Smart, Johnstown, N. Y.; and the Rev. John Russell, Queenston, Upper Canada. Should any of the ministers of the Associate Church in the Western and Southern States desire copies of this book for circulation in their neighborhood, they will be sent to them on commission.

TO THE CHRISTIAN PUBLIC.

The undersigned, having been requested to express their sentiments respecting the two treatises contained in this little volume, take pleasure in recommending them to all those who desire to *know* and *walk* in the truth, on the important subjects, of which they treat. Although there are other excellent treatises on these subjects which are occasionally to be found in the market; yet the present prevailing indifference to divine truth, especially on these all important points, the consequent abounding of Pelagian and Arminian errors in our country, seem to demand some defence of the Scripture views of these doctrines, at this time. In these two treatises, which are well calculated to accompany each other, the subjects discussed, viz. Predestination and Divine Sovereignty are set forth in a plain, able, and Scriptural manner. They have been both generally and justly esteemed by the friends of truth on the other side the Atlantic, and we can cordially recommend them to the christian public in our own country as eminently seasonable at the present time. They are here presented in a very cheap and convenient form and well adapted to a general circulation.

ALEXANDER BULLIONS, D. D.,

Pastor of the Associate Congregation of Cambridge, N. Y.

JAMES P. MILLER,

Pastor of the Associate Congregation of Argyle, N. Y.

JAMES MARTIN,

Pastor of the Associate Congregation of Albany, N. Y.

Cambridge, July 25th, 1831.

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